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Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Dos Santos (Mozambique): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that with your able guidance, expertise and outstanding diplomatic experience our deliberations will be crowned with success. I would also like to extend my delegation's congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. The delegation of the Republic of Mozambique wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation as you discharge your important responsibilities.

Allow me also to wholeheartedly congratulate the Secretary-General and the United Nations on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This is clear recognition of the outstanding role being played by the United Nations under the able leadership of the Secretary-General in international efforts to achieve peace and security in the world. We are very proud to be part of this family of nations.

The First Committee's session is informed this year by reports on the disturbing uncertainty over the maintenance of peace, security and disarmament in the world. Despite the extraordinary positive developments in the field of banning anti-personnel landmines and in tackling the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction continue to pose serious threats to mankind, with no progress in negotiations to reduce or limit them.

Last year, world leaders committed themselves, through the Millennium Declaration, to spare no effort to free our people from the scourge of war, whether within or between States, and to seek to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. We believe that the priority task of this session of the First Committee should be to translate this bold political commitment of our leaders into deeds.

Our first major concern is the persistence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the world. These weapons, which are a sad legacy of the cold war, are still kept, based on a rationale that not only is outdated but that also carries the potential for an arms race, given the insecurity they cause to those States unfortunate enough to be within their range.

In 2000, we applauded the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with the adoption of the relevant plan of action. We had hoped that, through the plan's agreed 13 practical steps, the days of the scourge of nuclear weapons would be numbered, as nuclear-weapon States agreed to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament. For the first time in 15 years, States parties were able to reach an historic consensus and

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establish an international standard for nuclear disarmament and the curbing of nuclear proliferation. We are seriously concerned that there is no movement in the implementation of this agenda.

Moreover, we have not seen tangible progress in the area of nuclear testing, although the moratorium appears to be holding. A definite ban on nuclear testing still awaits universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), particularly the key ratifications by all nuclear States. We are also deeply concerned about the possible abrogation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which will endanger international peace and security, as well as the strategic balance, and we express our profound apprehension over plans for new missile defence systems likely to spark a new arms race.

The threat of chemical and biological weapons remains high at a moment when we have experienced horrendous terrorist acts. We are far from the conclusion of the negotiations to ban the production of fissile material. No substantive progress has been achieved in establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the Conference on Disarmament has yet to reach consensus on its agenda.

Landmines continue to be a matter of concern to my Government, because they continue to kill, maim and threaten the lives of innocent people in many countries of the world, including my own country.

We welcome the entry into force of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction as a clear sign of the determination of the international community to free the world of these deadly weapons. The Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, recently held in Managua, reaffirmed the States parties' unwavering commitment to the total eradication of anti-personnel landmines and addressed the insidious and inhumane effects of these weapons.

The growing number of States parties to the Convention and the steady decrease in countries producing or using landmines, as well as the increase in cleared land, underscore the vitality of the fight against these deadly devices. However, we must highlight that we are still far from our ultimate objective of universal accession to the Convention in order to ensure the total and complete ban of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of landmines. I take this opportunity to appeal to all States that are not yet parties to adhere to the Convention.

Mozambique continues to play its role in combating landmines. We have registered significant progress in mine clearance, with more than 5 million square metres of land cleared and reclaimed for productive purposes. On the other hand, we have just concluded the survey of stockpiled landmines, totalling 38,000 mines. Our commitment is to conclude the destruction of all stockpiled mines by 2003, thus complying with the provisions of the Ottawa Convention.

The illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons has always been at the top of my Government's agenda. We are pleased with the adoption by consensus last July of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. This document provides the much needed international framework for comprehensive action to tackle this threat to peace and security in the world. Through its realistic, integrated and action-oriented approach, the Programme of Action is undoubtedly the best option at this point for concerted efforts towards curbing the destabilizing accumulation and easy availability of small arms and light weapons.

The high-level participation and the expression of commitment made during the Conference and the complex yet fruitful negotiations on the draft Programme of Action, as well as the ongoing efforts at the regional and subregional levels, are a solid foundation upon which to build future action. It was for me and my country a privilege and honour to have contributed towards the success of the Conference.

The time has now come for the international community to act. We must ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Programme of Action so as to give effect to the commitment made by our leaders, during the Millennium Summit, to end the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the world. The implementation of the Programme of Action will require political will, international cooperation and resources. Developing countries will need international cooperation and assistance to design and implement effective programmes for the collection, disposal and destruction of illicit small arms and light weapons. Failure to implement the Programme of Action will

only perpetuate the current suffering endured by humanity, and mainly by women, children and the elderly.

We have shown that when we have the determination to succeed, we can and do succeed. We have made the first steps and we should now proceed together, in cooperation and understanding. We in Mozambique are committed to this noble goal.

Comprehensive disarmament and the maintenance of peace and security in the world need to be addressed at the global level, through multilateral negotiations and agreements. In this exercise, the United Nations has a fundamental role to play as the guardian of peace and stability. The critical role of the United Nations was highlighted by the world leaders again in the Millennium Declaration, when they reiterated their faith in the Organization and its Charter as the indispensable foundations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

The United Nations, through its universal membership and experience, is the appropriate institution for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, particularly those provisions related to peace, security and disarmament. We welcome the Secretary-General's recent Road map report for the implementation of that important declaration, and we endorse the course of action proposed in it.

Mozambique is fully committed to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and calls upon all Member States to endorse the proposed Road map and provide the necessary resources to make it operational. The Secretary-General has just shown us the right path for peace, security and disarmament. It is now time for us to join hands and act decisively.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): At the outset, I should like to express on behalf of my delegation and myself our warm congratulations to you on your assumption of the office of Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that under your skilful and able leadership, our deliberations will reach a fruitful outcome. My congratulations also go to all other members of the Bureau for their well-deserved election. I should also like to pay my tribute to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his very useful overview.

I had the honour to speak on behalf of the countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on 9 October. However, allow me to highlight briefly some issues that are of particular interest to Myanmar.

At the Millennium Summit, our leaders demonstrated collective political will by pledging to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. To achieve this aim, they also expressed their willingness to consider the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating the nuclear danger. The important task for the international community is to translate these important commitments into reality.

We strongly believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. At the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we were heartened by the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of the nuclear arsenal, leading to nuclear disarmament. We have great expectations that these undertakings will be transformed into reality in the near future.

We are of the view that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. This has motivated Myanmar, together with other ASEAN countries, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia.

We cannot stress enough the importance of the signature and ratification of the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba by all regional States. The signature and ratification of the relevant Protocols to those Treaties by the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so are also very crucial. In this context, we welcome and continue our support for the initiatives taken by Mongolia on single-State nuclear-weapon-free status.

The universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would greatly contribute to our goals of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We look forward to participating in the forthcoming

Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in New York. We are encouraged that three nuclear-weapon States have ratified that important Treaty. We hope that the remaining nuclear-weapon-States, as well as those States identified in the Treaty's annex 2, will follow suit. We will also have the golden opportunity next year to review the implementation of the agreed practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT in the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

Myanmar has consistently called for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The setbacks that we have encountered in the past 12 months — the failure of negotiations on the protocol on the Biological Weapons Convention, lack of consensus in the Conference on Disarmament and delay in the entry into force of the CTBT — make the convening of the special session more urgent. This would enable us to review and assess our principles and priorities, as well as the formats of negotiations and forums for our future disarmament agenda.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Camilo Reyes of Colombia for his achievements during the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. My congratulations also go to Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique for his excellent chairmanship of the preparatory process. We now have a Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Although the outcome is not totally satisfactory to us all, it is a good beginning. We must make good use of the forthcoming Review Conference to take more effective measures to address the remaining two core issues: strict control of private ownership and prevention of the transfer of small arms to non-state actors.

We continue to believe that the Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral negotiating forum for all relevant disarmament matters. The continued impasse in the Conference on Disarmament damages the creditability of that important forum. We regret that the Conference on Disarmament was unable to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament. We call on all members of the Conference on Disarmament to show political will and greater flexibility in addressing this crucial issue.

The preservation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is crucial to the maintenance and promotion of strategic stability. The Treaty serves as the cornerstone in this regard. It also contributes to further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. We are in favour of a comprehensive approach towards missiles in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner. We look forward to the summit between the President of the Russian Federation and the President of the United States in the near future and hope that that meeting will provide an important impetus to the process of disarmament.

Since 1995, Myanmar has tabled a resolution on nuclear disarmament. We would like to express our deep appreciation to our co-sponsors and to the delegations that have supported the resolution. We will table a resolution on this subject again this year. I would like to request all delegations to give their favourable consideration to it.

During the next four weeks, we shall be deliberating issues that are central to global peace and security. Your role, Mr. Chairman, is crucial to the success of our endeavours. My delegation pledges our full cooperation to you so that the work of this Committee will result in a successful outcome.

Mr. El Kadiri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased, on behalf of the Kingdom of Morocco, to extend to you, Sir, my sincere congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I am convinced that your vast experience, your deep understanding of the issues on our agenda and your receptiveness are the best guarantors of the success of our work. I can assure you of my delegation's full cooperation towards a successful session.

We also compliment your predecessor, the Ambassador of Myanmar, who brilliantly led the work of our Committee at last year's session.

I take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his ongoing support on issues of security and disarmament and for his very interesting statement at the opening of the Committee's general debate.

The delegation of Morocco also offers its warmest congratulations to Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to this Organization and to him personally.

Our work at this session is taking place in the particularly sombre context of the tragic events of 11 September. The impact of those events, which is still very deeply felt, will certainly have a bearing on issues of international security and disarmament. The terrorist attacks against innocent civilians deeply shocked the entire international community, which was unanimous in its unequivocal condemnation. I wish here to reiterate the sincere condolences of the Government and the people of Morocco to the bereaved families and to the Government of the United States.

It is clear that those tragic events concern the international community, which must draw the necessary lessons from them. It must step up its efforts and focus its endeavours on finding the appropriate means to meet the present challenges to international security. The events cast light on the drawbacks of a unilateral approach to security and demonstrated the need to strengthen multilateral instruments related to international security and disarmament.

We are gratified by the spirit of cooperation and compassion demonstrated throughout the world in reaction to the 11 September attacks. We hope that this manifestation of solidarity and shared destiny will prove to be a catalyst for future international action and will provide an opportunity to restructure the often unilateral guidelines that have prevailed in the sphere of security and disarmament.

At the core of this Committee's concerns and priorities must be the search for new definitions of security that would emphasize its social, economic and cultural aspects and for new disarmament practices based on multilateral principles of equity and justice. Moreover, the international community must take action to bolster existing mechanisms and instruments and to set out a specific timetable for the successive stages of general disarmament and for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical and biological — in particular. Here, we believe that the contribution of civil-society actors — especially researchers, academics, experts and non-governmental organizations — would strengthen the sense of a community of interests among States in a world that is growing increasingly interdependent.

Looking at the general situation of disarmament throughout the world, we see a mixed picture which is characterized simultaneously by progress and by slowdowns — indeed, by regression, which is a source of concern.

We cannot fail to welcome the significant efforts made to date in the area of arms control and disarmament. These include: the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); the encouraging decisions taken at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT; the adoption of the Convention banning chemical weapons; and the recent adoption of the Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. But it is most disappointing to note that several multilateral disarmament initiatives have remained unrealized or face an uncertain future. A number of examples are: the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has not yet entered into force; the work of the Conference on Disarmament, which has been stalled by divergent views about its programme of work; negotiations on a protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention; and the commitment made during the 2000 NPT Review Conference by nuclear-weapon States to adopt practical disarmament measures, which has yet to be fulfilled.

Morocco recalls that it supports bilateral efforts; it is particularly gratified by agreements between the great Powers aimed at substantial reductions in their respective nuclear arsenals. We hope that those agreements will enter into force very soon and that they will be followed by further efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. But the key objective of complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament must be the object of multilateral instruments involving all States.

Morocco views disarmament as an essential element in conflict prevention, the building of international peace and security and the advancement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries. We have therefore remained committed to general and complete disarmament with respect both to weapons of mass destruction and to conventional weapons.

Morocco was among the first to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It attaches the highest importance to nuclear disarmament and non-

proliferation, and supports all initiatives to attain the objectives of the NPT. In its very first paragraph, the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the relevance of universal adherence to the Treaty as the best way to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It appealed unambiguously to all States not parties to the NPT to accede to it promptly and without condition.

Moreover, the nuclear Powers on that occasion undertook an unequivocal commitment to adopt practical disarmament measures under article VI of the Treaty with a view to eliminating their nuclear arsenals. While welcoming this, Morocco believes that it is time to fulfil that commitment, which would bolster confidence-building measures between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States.

Those matters will be considered at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. We hope that the elements of a solution will be found within the context of the 2005 Review Conference.

The Kingdom of Morocco believes that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an effective international legal instrument that can put an end to nuclear proliferation, contribute to nuclear disarmament and thus strengthen international peace and security. In the light of the delayed entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, Morocco appeals to all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. The long delay in the entry into force of that important instrument has been regrettable and runs counter to our desire for a world free of ail nuclear threats. Thus, it is necessary to convene the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in order to study the obstacles and to identify the right way to overcome them.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones helps strengthen regional and international peace and security, contributes to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and bolsters the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The 2000 NPT Review Conference supported the establishment of new zones where they do not yet exist, such as in the Middle East.

While welcoming the initiatives that have led to the establishment of such zones, such as the Treaty of Pelindaba for Africa, Morocco is committed to making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The establishment of such a zone would be both a disarmament and a nuclear non-proliferation measure. This requires that the only State of the region that has yet to accede to the NPT — Israel — should become a State party to the Treaty and submit its nuclear installations to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Here, Israel must shoulder its historic responsibility and be aware of the fundamental importance of the creation of such a zone. So, too, the nuclear Powers, which undertook clear commitments on this matter during the 1995 Conference, which indefinitely extended the NPT, must make maximum efforts to achieve an objective as basic as that of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Moroccan delegation is gratified to note an increase in the number of States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Efforts must be continued to implement as quickly as possible the universality of this important legal instrument for disarmament.

In addition, the dynamic action of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), in a context characterized by a slowdown in disarmament efforts, deserves our full encouragement. Financial constraints facing the Organization which are more and more pressing, are likely to slow down this momentum and to reduce its activities at a time when, more than ever, it needs the support of its member States.

Morocco would like specifically to stress the importance of providing international assistance and cooperation as a major element under the Convention, in accordance with articles 10 and 11. Indeed, the exchange of experience and the promotion of bilateral and multilateral agreements on international cooperation are appropriate means that can assist in implementing the objectives of the Convention.

Morocco believes that reductions in military budgets and conventional weapons are a critical objective that allows for the reallocation of the resources released to economic and social development.

As a backer of international regulations on the trafficking of light weapons, particularly through the adoption of a legally binding international instrument, Morocco participated in the United Nations Conference

on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, where a Programme of Action was adopted to combat this global scourge. We will be following with great interest the stages of its implementation, particularly as regards Africa, which is very much affected by the illicit trade in light weapons. We welcome the moratoriums on trade in small arms declared by African States, which are participating in efforts aimed at conflict prevention and at peace-building on our African continent.

Regarding the issue of anti-personnel mines, Morocco would like to recall that it unconditionally adheres to the humanitarian principles and purposes contained in the provisions of the Ottawa Convention. My country, which has participated in the entire process of drawing up this Convention, will continue actively to contribute to the continuing de-mining actions and will support the campaigns emerging at the regional level, particularly on the African continent.

Despite the indivisible nature of Euro-Mediterranean security and despite the promises of partnership that have been reiterated on many occasions, the Mediterranean, as a recent declaration of the European Parliament declared, has become a zone that is a microcosm of the principal contradictions of the twenty-first century and is likely to produce irreversible demographic, economic, political and cultural divisions.

At the crossroads of three continents, the Mediterranean is in a state of constant tension and must cope with major political, economic, ecological and demographic challenges, let alone a host of global social scourges that affect this region. To meet those challenges, the countries of the Mediterranean basin have no choice other than to coordinate their policies within a framework of collective, cooperative approaches taken in solidarity. The social ills with which the Mediterranean region is saturated should not be seen as giving rise to a major strategic risk between the two shores of the Mediterranean, thereby justifying highly defensive policies or a retreat to isolationism for security reasons. Quite the contrary — in order to pinpoint the causes and reduce the effects of this entire set of phenomena that threaten the region's security, they must be considered as a result of poverty and of the development gap between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Indeed, there are numerous security problems that now appear as security issues but began as a result of the economic and social divisions and political or cultural intolerance. In this context, it is important to recall the message of His Late Majesty King Hassan II, who said it would be an illusion to believe that, even when peace was once again restored to the Middle East and the Balkans, this would suffice to allow the Mediterranean to regain its historic mission of trade, interpenetration and movement of all kinds, things which have contributed to its historic legacy. There must also be parallel efforts to deal with the economic and social disparity, these difficult and growing disparities that exist throughout the Mediterranean region.

It is in the same spirit that Morocco sets as one of its essential priorities in the area of security and disarmament the building a Maghreb regional group. It would serve as a guarantee of stability and a confidence-building measure for the States of the region, which must devote the thrust of their efforts to economic and social development.

It must be recalled here that the loyal and effective commitment of States to general and complete disarmament must serve to assist their access to sophisticated technology designed for peaceful purposes, with due respect for their choices linked to social and economic development.

Finally, it is of interest to note that the multilateral practice of this Committee seems to have led to the creation of a specific lexicon for the disarmament process with the repeated usage of such concepts as irreversibility, unconditional commitment, confidence-building measures, prevention, flexibility, follow-up, consensus and so forth. We welcome this development in terms of words, but we believe that it must be accompanied by similar and irreversible development and facts.

Mr. Jalang'o (Kenya): Mr. Chairman, let me begin by congratulating you upon your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee during this session. Your worthy qualities, rich experience and diplomatic acumen will no doubt steer our work to very fruitful conclusions. Let me take this opportunity also to congratulate the other members of the Bureau upon their election.

Allow me to extend the thanks of my delegation to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, and his team in the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the indefatigable manner

in which they have continued to discharge their responsibility in the quest for greater security and in the cause of disarmament. The statement delivered by the Under-Secretary-General on the opening day of this debate was an eloquent testimony to the commitment and seriousness with which the Department has continued to discharge its obligations.

On behalf of my delegation, I also take this opportunity to express happiness and joy with the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and indeed the United Nations. It is all the more reason why this Committee should endeavour to break new ground in security and disarmament issues, having been so charged by the Secretary-General himself, for the general good of humanity.

The world is still gripped by vivid pictures of the events of 11 September, when terrorists struck in New York and Washington, D.C. The cruel hand of terror took away thousands of lives that morning and destroyed billions of dollars worth of assets.

While Kenya immediately condemned those cowardly and heinous acts and conveyed condolences and sympathy to the victims and their families and to the people and the Government of the United States of America, I wish to reiterate our sentiments once more. Kenya knows only too well the horror of the callous hand of terrorism, having been the victim of a similar attack in 1998, when the American Embassy in Nairobi was bombed by terrorists. Two hundred and twenty-four Kenyan and American lives were lost. Many more were left with severed limbs and ugly scars. There are now empty spaces in Nairobi where once stood solid and beautiful buildings. We note that the events of 11 September have galvanized concerted efforts to tackle the problem of terrorism through a consistent, sustained and comprehensive campaign. Guided by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, Kenya stands firmly in support of measures to deal with the menace.

The events of 11 September bring into sharp focus the need to agree on measures to check the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and eventually to eliminate them. We share the concern of the Secretary-General, which he voiced in his speech of 1 October, that indeed the events of 11 September could have caused a loss of life of even more horrific proportions if more deadly means had been within the reach of, and used by, the terrorists.

There is therefore a need to urgently ensure the non-proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. We believe that the international community should work for the universalization of the various multilateral conventions and other legal instruments which have been elaborated on these weapons.

Kenya is a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and is committed to the eradication of such weapons. In this respect, the Government has, inter alia, appropriately established a national authority which serves as the focal point on matters relating to the Convention, including at the subregional level. A database has also been established on relevant chemicals and substances. Besides these measures, the Government intends to enact legislation which notably will control the movement and handling of scheduled chemical substances.

Last year, the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted 13 steps aimed at reducing and eventually eliminating the threat posed by nuclear weapons. Since then there has been no progress towards the implementation of these steps, which had been agreed upon. The three States which were outside the Treaty have not acceded to it. It is imperative that all States join international treaties aimed at enhancing the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and eventually eliminating them.

Last year, this Committee endorsed the importance of the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) as the cornerstone of global strategic stability. My delegation holds most strongly to this position. It is for this reason that we deem any unilateral measure which would diminish the importance of the ABM Treaty a threat to global security and stability. Such measures would inevitably result in a new arms race, including the placing of systems and arms in outer space. The arms race that this could ignite would be multidimensional. It is for these reasons that my delegation calls for the preservation and enhancement of the current global strategic balance through the honouring of the provisions of the ABM Treaty. Such a posture is necessary for the implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III.

Kenya, like other delegations, particularly those that are members of the Conference on Disarmament, is deeply concerned that for the third year running, the Conference has not been able to agree on a programme of work. It has not done any substantive work during these three years.

The Conference has for a considerable time been expected to undertake substantive work with a view to elaborating legally binding international instruments on disarmament. For instance, the General Assembly has in various resolutions over the years urged the Conference to carry out such negotiations. During its fifty-fifth session, the Assembly adopted at least four different resolutions, which, inter alia, called on the Conference to negotiate a treaty on nuclear disarmament.

As the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations, the Conference cannot afford to continue losing time. There are several important issues on its agenda, ranging from nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to new weapons of mass destruction. These are crucial elements for international peace and security and therefore should be addressed as a matter of priority.

We appreciate the fact that during its 2001 session, the Conference, in an attempt to find a way forward, appointed three Special Coordinators — for review of its agenda, expansion of its membership, and improved and effective functioning — to look into certain aspects of its work. Despite these efforts, the Conference was still not able to reach a consensus on any of the issues relating to the three areas.

Subsequently, in its report for this year, the Conference recommends the reappointment of the Special Coordinators as early as possible in its 2002 session. Whereas such a step is welcome in principle, it must be borne in mind that this exercise is not real work and should therefore not be allowed to divert attention from substantive work.

We realize that the paralysis in the Conference is due to a number of factors. These include the lack of political will on the part of some Member States to negotiate on certain agenda items. Others are strategic issues which are extraneous to the Conference. The States concerned should realize, however, that their unwillingness to engage in negotiations will only deepen the crisis in the Conference. Its vocation as the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament issues has already been compromised. The international community will have even less faith in it. The Conference on Disarmament must thus be revived promptly.

The establishment by the Secretary-General of a panel of experts to look into the issue of missiles is a very welcome development. Missiles as delivery systems have a direct bearing on global and strategic stability, and, indeed, have been cited as a factor in the creeping ABM Treaty problem. We look forward to receiving the report of these experts at the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Finally, my delegation would like to turn to an area in which positive achievement has been recorded. In July last year, the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects ended with the adoption of a Programme of Action.

My delegation would like to thank Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique once again for his painstaking efforts in steering the work of the Preparatory Committee, which gave us the final working document. My delegation also thanks Ambassador Camilio Reyes for skilfully guiding the Conference in its concluding stages. As noted then, the African Group painfully agreed to the deletion of aspects dealing with the private possession of weapons and the supply of arms to non-State actors, yielding to the opposition of a single State. It is hoped that the events of 11 September will tilt the balance towards the serious consideration and incorporation of these vital and crucial aspects in the Programme of Action in the future. Above all, my delegation looks forward to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

In this vein, Kenya thanks the Secretary-General and the Department for Disarmament Affairs for dispatching a fact-finding mission to Kenya in July-August this year, with the objective of collecting relevant data on the magnitude of the problem of illicit small arms in Kenya, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. Kenya has associated itself with its report and looks forward to practical cooperation in confronting the menace.

Mr. Kasemsarn (Thailand): On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I am confident that under your leadership and guidance the First Committee will indeed fulfil its tasks during these

difficult times. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

I would also like to express the appreciation of my delegation to Ambassador Mya Than of Myanmar and the other members of his Bureau for the skilled manner in which they contributed to the success of last year's First Committee session.

Thailand would also like to associate itself with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) statement delivered by Myanmar.

Thailand joins the international community in expressing, in the strongest terms, our condemnation of the horrifying terrorist acts on 11 September. This tragedy has indeed united the international community with renewed strength and determination to fight international terrorism within the framework of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The incidents on 11 September are a wake-up call for all of us to re-examine the issue of international terrorism with a broader perspective. It would not be difficult to imagine how more horrifying the consequences would be if terrorists were to have access to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. The Secretary-General rightly reminded us of this in his statement to the General Assembly on 1 October. The close connections between international terrorism and the illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other deadly materials, and illegal arms trafficking, should be of concern to all of us. It is more important than ever that the international community redouble its efforts to give renewed vigour to the disarmament process, especially with regard to such weapons of mass destruction.

The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and their total elimination remain the ultimate aim of disarmament. The Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference was an important step forward in our efforts to achieve the twin goals of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We would like to remind the nuclear-weapon States of their unequivocal commitment to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Likewise, those States also have an obligation to transfer nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to non-nuclear-weapon States. Proliferation of nuclear weapons, and their possible acquisition by non-State actors, especially in light of international terrorism, as I mentioned earlier, are significant challenges that the international community needs to continue to address. There is no viable alternative to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the safeguards within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another important component in the global effort to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We look forward to the convening of the Conference for Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date in order to inject greater vitality into the CTBT process. Thailand, for its part, is in the process of ratifying the CTBT. We call on other States which have not done so — particularly those States whose ratification is required to bring the Treaty into effect — to expedite their accession to and ratification of the Treaty.

At a time when there appears to be some lethargy about, or setback in, the nuclear disarmament process, concrete and practical confidence-building activities are called for. We thus urge the nuclear-weapon States to show their good faith with regard to their unequivocal commitment to nuclear disarmament through, inter alia, reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons and promoting greater transparency in nuclear-weapon capabilities. In this connection, we welcome the indications of further cuts in their nuclear arsenals by the United States and the Russian Federation.

Furthermore, Thailand also supports the initiative by the New Agenda Coalition, which has brought fresh impetus to the effort towards nuclear disarmament. We take note with great interest of the recent communiqué on this matter by the Coalition Foreign Ministers. We also reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's proposal to convene an international conference on ways to eliminate nuclear dangers, as well as for the early launching of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, with full participation by all Member States of the United Nations.

The effective functioning and expansion of nuclear-weapon-free zones can be, and have been, an important contribution to the global nuclear non-proliferation objective. It is for this reason that Thailand has consistently supported General Assembly

resolutions on nuclear-weapon-free zones. In South-East Asia, Thailand has always been an active proponent of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and is the depositary State of the relevant treaty — the Bangkok Treaty. The Philippines having recently deposited its instrument of ratification of the Treaty with Thailand, all 10 ASEAN members are now fully participating in the Zone's Commission. We also recognize that the support of the nuclear-weapon States for the Treaty's Protocol is key to the Zone's effective functioning. We thus welcome the first-ever direct consultations between ASEAN and the nuclear-weapon States in May this year. We hope that they will eventually lead to the accession of the nuclear-weapon States to the Protocol to the Treaty.

As stipulated in the Treaty, activities on nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety and the safeguarding of nuclear material are to be implemented with reference to IAEA standards and guidelines. There have been a number of joint SEANWFZ/IAEA activities in the past years. The most recent one was a SEANWFZ/IAEA regional workshop on a strategic plan for radiation safety, held in Bangkok on 11 August this year.

Apart from nuclear weapons, we should pay equal attention to the other weapons of mass destruction — biological and/or chemical.

On biological weapons, as effective verification measures are an integral part of the effective functioning of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we regret that the Ad Hoc Group on the draft composite text of the BWC Protocol failed to achieve a consensus and to adopt a final report of its work. We hope that this impasse can be resolved in the near future. It is in this spirit that we look forward to the Fifth Review Conference of the BWC in November.

On chemical weapons, Thailand hopes to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) by the end of this year. As an indication of our support for the CWC process, Thailand co-sponsored the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, adopted in September as resolution 55/283.

We cannot be oblivious to other conventional weapons, such as landmines and small arms and light weapons, which have indeed killed more innocent people than weapons of mass destruction.

On landmines, Thailand welcomes the results of the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Managua, Nicaragua, from 18 to 21 September. We view that meeting as an important step forward in ultimately creating a mine-free world. The establishment of an implementation support unit, one of the key concrete achievements of the Meeting, would help facilitate the implementation of the Convention. Thailand is pleased to serve as co-Chairman of the intersessional Standing Committee of Experts on the General Status and Operation of the Convention, and through that role hopes to contribute to moving forward the Ottawa process. Furthermore, to promote greater understanding of the effects of landmines on their victims, Thailand will co-host a regional conference on mine victim assistance next month. We sincerely hope that, in the near future, Thailand, with the Cabinet's approval, will host a meeting of States parties.

On small arms and light weapons, we welcome the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York in July. Although the results of the Conference did not meet the expectations of all concerned, we believe that the resulting Programme of Action provides a good platform for an evolving process of enhanced international cooperation to tackle the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We hope that the international community will be actively involved in the follow-up to the Conference, and particularly in providing assistance to States with limited resources in implementing the Programme of Action.

We attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum on general disarmament matters. We regret the ongoing deadlock in the Conference, which impacts the multilateral approaches on disarmament. In spite of the current situation, Thailand remains a strong supporter of the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament, of which we would like to be a member.

Finally, despite slow progress along many fronts, we should continue to reinforce the multilateral framework and reaffirm the spirit of multilateralism in meeting the challenge of disarmament. This requires more than good faith. It requires the political will of all nations, large or small, to turn swords into

ploughshares. This will allow States to devote resources and efforts productively to tackling the challenges of poverty and sustainable development, which will help mankind move one major step closer to a better and more secure future.

Mr. Al-Malki (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your unanimous election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. Given your wide-ranging experience and diplomatic skill, I am fully confident that you will conduct our deliberations at this session in an effective and competent manner. I am also pleased to convey, through you, my most sincere congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. I wish you every success in your work.

Allow me also to express my heartfelt condolences to the American people over the victims of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

The issue of disarmament and arms limitation — especially with regard to weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear weapons in particular — is a serious concern of the international community, because of the risks they pose and their implications for international peace and security as a whole. Despite the fact that the confrontation between the two super-Powers has come to an end, we continue to see a competition to possess ever more destructive weapons. That desire is greater now than ever before and represents a major goal of groups and States, a situation that causes great imbalance in the world and poses a risk to the very existence of the human race.

The great Powers must therefore supervise and control such efforts and nip in the bud the possibility of such weapons falling into the hands of groups or States that have no respect for human life. To meet the demands of the international community in this area, such States must also reduce their stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. In order to meet their defence needs, States must summon the political will necessary to reach equitable and balanced agreements that do not favour one party over another.

My delegation attaches great importance to the issue of peace and stability in the Middle East, which will be achieved only through confidence-building measures, mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and arms control measures intended to avoid imbalances in the region. Israel's possession of excessive quantities of weapons, its stupendous arsenal of highly destructive and unconventional weapons and its categorical refusal to place its nuclear installations under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards constitute a flagrant challenge to the international community. They also pose a serious threat to regional security in the Middle East, thereby jeopardizing international security as a whole.

My country closely monitors the daily tragedies Israel visits on defenceless civilians, as well as its use of its military machines, aircraft, tanks and missiles against Palestinian towns and villages. Its actions cause scores of injuries and deaths among innocent defenceless civilians whose only goal and aspiration is to enjoy peace and security on their territory, just like the rest of humankind. My country therefore calls for reason to prevail over force. In order to save the region from the vicious cycle of terrorism and violence, we call for an end to terrorist acts and the use of excessive force, for a return to the negotiating table and for Israel's full compliance with all its agreements with the Palestinian Authority.

The immense proliferation of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in the world is one of the main obstacles to human development, growth and construction. It is also a factor which compromises the security and stability of peoples and violates human rights and international laws. This trade is undoubtedly as dangerous as weapons of mass destruction, as it creates a threat to international peace and security. My country therefore participated in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 9 July to 20 July this year, which gave the international community an opportunity to adopt specific measures aimed at combating that international problem. We welcome the Programme of Action adopted by consensus at the Conference, as a first important step towards achieving the goal of preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Combating and putting an end to the danger posed by such weapons will be a first step towards ridding the world of other types of weapons.

My delegation cannot fail to express its appreciation and gratitude to the Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Camilio Reyes, as well as to Ambassador Carlos dos Santos of Mozambique, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, for their valuable and unstinting efforts, which contributed to

the success of the Conference. We also welcome the presidential statement on small arms issued by the Security Council on 31 August this year, as well as the role played by Colombia in this respect.

Landmines still pose a danger to the countries and the peoples of the world, obstruct the development and stability of affected States. My country therefore supports the efforts of the Secretary-General in calling on all States to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, as well as to amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, so that they can achieve universality. Furthermore, my country supports continued action by the United Nations in working on a programme to eliminate mines and in helping the victims of mines, as well as implementing emergency plans in countries and areas affected by such mines.

The State of Bahrain has always fought terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It supports the efforts of the international community in combating terrorism as well as in investigating its causes and origins. At the same time, we reaffirm the need to protect the brotherly Muslim Afghani people, who should not be punished for acts that they did not commit.

We would also like to reaffirm here the importance of the inherent right of the Palestinian people to defend themselves and recover their territories. We must therefore distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate struggle by a people under the yoke of foreign control.

The goal of humanity remains to ensure that this planet can enjoy peace and stability. That is the aspiration of all the nations of the world in the new millennium. As this international Organization is the embodiment of that aspiration for international peace and security, the role of the United Nations in preventing conflict and disputes between peace-loving States increases day by day. Supporting the United Nations as it strives to fulfil its responsibilities in the world is, indeed, a safety valve for ensuring security for all the nations of the world.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): Before taking up the topic of our debate today, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Your vast experience in the United Nations will certainly be an important asset, as well as a catalyst for the Committee's deliberations. In guiding them, you can count on the full support and positive contribution of the Yugoslav delegation. We also extend our congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau.

The current debate is taking place against the background of the horrific terrorist attacks against the United States of 11 September, which reverberated throughout the world. The gruesome message they sent was that we are confronted with an enormous threat to international peace and security that calls for the establishment of a united front at all levels as the only effective means of eliminating terrorism. In order to achieve that goal, resolute, global, coordinated and persistent action by the international community is imperative. Such action should address not only the consequences of terrorism, which jeopardize the very foundations of international stability and security, but also the root causes of militant extremism, radicalism and violence. The United Nations should be the centre of such engagement. That also holds true for United Nations efforts in the fields of disarmament and the maintenance of international security.

In this connection, I would like to highlight one aspect which is particularly important: weapons of mass destruction. The possibility that terrorist groups may acquire weapons of mass destruction is real. If that came to pass, the consequences would be unimaginable. It is therefore necessary to significantly strengthen non-proliferation and control regimes for weapons of that type.

Furthermore, the importance of our collective engagement in countering threats of biological and toxin weapons cannot be emphasized enough. Additional action is also needed to reconfirm the determination of the international community to annihilate, once and for all, all chemical weapons, as envisaged in the Chemical Weapons Convention.

For its part, Yugoslavia is making a contribution to these and other related disarmament issues. Since last November, my country has joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We have also become parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Geneva Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. In addition, we have

signed the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines; ratification is expected to take place soon. We are committed to fully implementing our obligations and are ready to participate in all initiatives to strengthen and further improve these international disarmament instruments in a constructive way.

Another disarmament topic, also connected to the problem of terrorism, deals with small arms and light weapons. We participated very actively in the United Nations Conference on this issue held in New York last July, and supported the Programme of Action adopted at the Conference. On the domestic front, we are in the process of reviewing and revising a number of regulations in order to strengthen control of the production and sale of and trade in these weapons. Also, we are actively engaged on this issue at the regional level, within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. The problem of the illicit trade in small arms in our region, and the related problems of transnational organized crime, trafficking in drugs and human beings and money laundering, call for a regional response, in which we are ready to participate very actively.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is firmly committed to the strengthening of regional stability and security, and, in this connection, to the promotion of regional cooperation. In order to achieve that, we must maintain and develop good-neighbourly relations, based on respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and the equality of States, as provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. This is the first priority of Yugoslav foreign policy.

Yugoslavia continues to invest its best efforts in resolving the remaining problems that threaten the stability and security of the region. Unfortunately, the problems are very complex and not at all easy to tackle. In these efforts we find it important to cooperate closely, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), with the international community and its presences, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Kosovo and Metohija. Yugoslavia believes that the time has come for the region to make a joint effort, together with other involved and interested international actors, to think through and address the future security framework for our part of the world in a thorough and comprehensive way. We shall not achieve much if we extinguish fire in one corner of the region and see it re-emerge in another.

In this connection, let me reiterate the importance of the Macedonian initiative concerning the maintenance of international security, good neighbourliness, stability and development in Southeastern Europe, which is under consideration in this Committee and which we fully support. As I have already mentioned, the development of stable relations among neighbour countries on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation is an important stepping stone in maintaining peace and building stability in Southeastern Europe and beyond.

The Chairman: I now call on the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Renato Martino (Holy See): My delegation extends its congratulations on your election, Sir, as Chairman of this important Committee. Congratulations are also extended to the members of the Bureau. Through your able leadership and rich expertise and experience, I am sure that the proceedings of this Committee will be assured of a successful outcome.

On this occasion, allow me to express my sincere appreciation for the valuable contribution of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, in matters concerning global disarmament and peace. It is contributions such as his that have indeed helped this Organization win the Nobel Peace Price this year.

We meet at a time of profound distress. The evil of terrorism has struck in unimaginable ways. The response of the world community to this act of terrorism demands leadership of the highest order.

First, those responsible must be apprehended and brought to justice through due process. This must be done in a way that does not expose even more innocent civilians to death and destruction. Violence added to violence will only lead to more violence. This is a time for wisdom and perseverance. Justice, not vengeance, must be our goal.

Pope John Paul II, on 13 September, in accepting the credentials of the new Ambassador of the United States to the Holy See, said, "In facing the challenges of the future, America is called to cherish and live out the deepest values of her national heritage: solidarity

and cooperation between peoples; respect for human rights; the justice that is the indispensable condition for authentic freedom and lasting peace." He thus expressed his prayer "that this inhuman act will awaken in the hearts of all the world's people a firm resolve to reject the ways of violence, to combat everything that sows hatred and division within the human family."

We do a disservice to those who have died in this tragedy if we fail to search out the causes. Here a broad canvas of political, economic, social, religious and cultural factors emerge. The common denominator of these factors is hate. This is a hate that transcends any one people or region. It is a hatred of humanity itself. This hatred kills even the one who hates. Acts of revenge will not cure such hatred. Rather, we must remove the most obvious elements that spawn the conditions for hatred and violence.

Though poverty is not by itself the cause of terrorism, we cannot successfully combat terrorism if we do not address the growing disparities between the rich and the poor. We must recognize that global disparity is fundamentally incompatible with global security. Poverty, along with other situations of marginalization that engulf the lives of so many of the world's people, including the denial of human dignity, the lack of respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, social dislocation, intolerable refugee situations, internal and external displacement and physical and psychological oppression, are breeding grounds just waiting to be exploited by terrorists.

In searching out the root causes of terrorism, we are in no way condoning terrorism. But any serious crime reduction effort cannot be confined only to intensified police work. Any serious campaign against terrorism needs to address the social, economic and political conditions that nurture the emergence of terrorism.

The most dramatic example of inequality is the growing gap between the rich and the poor. As we know, the North, containing a fifth of the world population, controls 80 per cent of the world's wealth and resources; the South, with four-fifths of world population, has only 20 per cent of the wealth and resources. This is not only unjust; it is a threat to the stability of the planet. It is the determination of the strong to maintain their position by whatever means necessary, whether military, financial or political, that is the basis for the systemic inequality in the world. A commitment to equity in the world is the only secure foundation for a more humane world order. Nations must work together to blunt current disparities and improve global stability. A continuation of the unjust status quo will inevitably continue fuelling conflicts and will lead to even more conflicts in the decades ahead.

There are conflicts today in several regions that do not even receive world attention. With their ease-of-use and ready availability, small arms are the weapons of choice for today's combatants. The supply of almost limitless quantities of small arms and light weapons through areas of high tension has fuelled numerous civil wars and social chaos. Small arms kill upwards of 10,000 people per week. Most of these victims are civilians.

Even after armed conflict has subsided, small arms often leave a culture of violence, which continues to contribute to much of the human misery and economic and social disruption in war-torn societies. As a result, international relief missions are being suspended more frequently as aid workers increasingly find themselves the targets of attacks. Consequently, civilians often suffer increased pain and are deprived longer.

To date, efforts to respond to this situation have resembled a loose web of initiatives with varying interests and objectives involving many countries and organizations.

Unlike in the effort to ban anti-personnel mines, no country has taken the lead on a comprehensive approach, and many States have only grudgingly engaged the issue. Given the international scope of the dilemma, the United Nations sought to build upon its history of dealing with the small-arms issue by holding a major meeting in July of this year to discuss concrete actions the international community could take.

The Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects has been attributed with various degrees of success and failure. In terms of success, 189 countries were able to agree on a Programme of Action that urges Governments to enact laws, regulations and administrative procedures to prevent illicit trafficking in small arms and to make the illegal manufacturing, possession, stockpiling and trade of these weapons a criminal offence. It was also decided that a review conference is to be held no later

than 2006 to examine progress in implementing the agreement, thereby ensuring that this would be the first step in what is expected to be a lengthy effort. The Conference has also been commended for placing a spotlight on the issue of small arms and providing an important platform for civil society and concerned Governments to press for serious action.

However, the success of the Conference was limited from the beginning, since it set out only to discuss the illegal aspects of the small arms trade. This focus has been criticized for ignoring the fact that most illicit weapons originate in the legal export market before being diverted. Moreover, the agreement that was reached is a non-binding, voluntary declaration with no enforcement mechanism, thereby raising the question of how seriously it will be taken by its signatories. Unfortunately, the Conference's final document did not include provisions that would have regulated civilian gun ownership and restricted arms transfers to legitimate States.

This past year also saw efforts to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention. A protocol had been drawn up to enforce the 1972 Convention, which would require signatory States to declare all industrial facilities capable of manufacturing biological weapons. The lack of full agreement to the protocol was another setback for the international cooperation that is so necessary to prevent terrorism. Combating the dangers of terrorist use of deadly organisms requires international institutions of arms control that are more credible than the present ones.

The tragedy of 11 September must compel us to sharpen our sense of urgency and to respond effectively to the dangers we face. Let us recall the words of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who said during the recent debate on terrorism in the General Assembly,

> "It is hard to imagine how the tragedy of 11 September could have been worse. Yet the truth is that a single attack involving a nuclear or biological weapon could have killed millions. While the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. The greatest danger arises from a non-State group, or even an individual, acquiring and using a nuclear, biological, or chemical weapon. Such a weapon could be delivered without the need for any missile or any other sophisticated delivery system." (*A/56/PV.12*)

The Holy See has, in this Committee, frequently urged implementation of the obligations all States bear under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), obligations reinforced by the International Court of Justice. That obligation was expressed succinctly in the 2000 NPT Review Conference, in which all 187 signatories pledged an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We must now tackle the central problem of nuclear weapons, especially the mentality of those who possess them and claim that they are essential to security. Now is the time to dispel this claim and to declare that the continued possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is endangering all humanity and that they must be abolished.

With the Secretary-General, the Holy See calls for intensifying efforts to ensure the universality, verification and full implementation of key treaties relating to weapons of mass destruction, including those outlawing chemical and biological weapons and the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Special attention must be given to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The international Conference postponed as a result of the 11 September attacks must go ahead to ensure the entry into force of the Treaty. I am informed that the Conference will take place in November — a good decision.

Having signed the CTBT on 24 September 1996, the Holy See deposited its instrument of ratification on 18 July of this year. The Holy See, reiterating the firm conviction that "Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the twenty-first century", (*A/C.1/52/PV.5, PV.15*) added,

> "the Holy See is convinced that, in the sphere of nuclear weapons, the banning of tests and of the further development of these weapons, disarmament and non-proliferation are closely linked and must be achieved as quickly as possible under effective international controls." (*A/C.1/51/PV.12, p. 9*)

Today, the Holy See adds its voice to the appeal to the States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the treaty.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's Preparatory Commission has done commendable work in enabling the world community to have confidence that the CTBT will produce positive results. The Independent Commission on the Verifiability of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty provides assurance that the various scientific instruments and networks will be able to detect, locate and identify with high probability any deviation from the demands of the Treaty.

The continued success of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requires the entry into force of the CTBT. If the world is to stop the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, then the flow of the development of such weapons must be stauncheds at the source. A weakened NPT and an inoperable CTBT will force the world to continue wandering through a dangerous morass of tensions and recrimination. The security of all States will continue to be severely jeopardized.

The present course — more arms and more poverty — is leading us to human disasters even greater than that which we endured on 11 September. The basic requirements for the peace we seek are the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, the curbing of the arms trade and the eradication of massive, endemic poverty. We have no choice if humanity is to survive.

This distressing time must teach us that violence and war are not inevitable. An unavoidable clash of civilizations is not our fate. War and mass violence usually result from deliberate political decisions. Rather than intervening in violent conflicts after they have erupted and then engaging in post-conflict peace-building, it is more humane and more efficient to prevent such violence in the first place by addressing its roots. This is the essence of the approach to a culture of peace.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Israel to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Issacharoff (Israel): I am sorry to have to take the floor in the exercise of my delegation's right of reply, but the representative of Bahrain chose to devote his speech almost entirely to attacking my country. Indeed, it saddens me that the representative of Bahrain chose this opportunity to voice a number of false accusations in relation to Israel, particularly at a time when our region is so desperately in need of a more positive contribution to regional peace and stability. I would have thought that the representative would have better spent his time by outlining his own country's policies in this regard, rather than by maligning other countries.

I will not relate or add dignity to the representative of Bahrain's false accusations, but I would like to say that, if he stated towards the end of his speech that terror is to be condemned, except terror committed against Israel, then his statement itself is worthy of every condemnation.

There can be no justification for terror. Those who try to find ways to justify it, as the Bahraini representative did, will only ensure its perpetuation.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/56/PV.10

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

First Committee
10th meeting
Tuesday, 16 October 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: I wish at the outset to extend a warm welcome to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, who has joined us here today.

I wish also, on behalf of the Committee, and on my own account, to extend a cordial welcome to the group of Disarmament Fellows who are with us today. Over the past 22 years, the Disarmament Fellowship Programme has trained several hundred young diplomats, who have made a significant contribution to global efforts in the cause of disarmament and international peace and security. Some of them have become important representatives of their respective countries, including some who are present amongst us at this session of the First Committee.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

The Chairman: I want to thank delegations for allowing the Chair to regroup the statements that are to be made, to enable us to make better use of our time on Thursday and Friday and so that we can better prepare for the second phase of the Committee's work.

Mr. Sood (India): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that the diplomatic skill, the experience and the very visible sense of discipline that you bring to your task will help you fulfil the responsibility entrusted on you, while also facilitating the work of all delegations present here. My delegation would like to assure you of its full cooperation in your efforts.

I would like also to take note of the presence here this afternoon of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, and of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the Conference on Disarmament and Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Mr. Petrovsky, which testifies to the importance that the United Nations system attaches to the work of the First Committee.

As we assemble again in New York for a session of the First Committee, we are acutely aware that we are only a short distance away from the site of the devastating terrorist attack of 11 September, an attack that cost thousands of innocent lives and reinforced the need for the international community to take concerted action to ensure the security of all people. The diversity of the nationalities of the victims of that event is symbolic, in a tragic sense, of the global nature of the scourge of terrorism and, I would suggest, defines the kind of collective response it deserves. We share in the grief of those bereaved. We know what it means. Tens of thousands of Indians have become victims of terrorist acts in the past two decades. This carnage has been aided, abetted and promoted across borders as

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part of the phenomenon now described as terrorism with a global reach, a phenomenon that is widely accepted as the primary threat to plural societies. While continuing our own battle against that threat, we remain ready to join collective efforts to deal with groups and regimes which engage in, or aid and abet, such crimes against humanity.

Recent developments underline the need for us not to procrastinate on a number of issues that threaten international peace and security. We should seize this moment to redouble our resolve to address squarely the issues before the Committee and to take certain measures that we have not been able to take in the past. Consider the threat posed by nuclear weapons, which remains central to the work of this Committee. The security that all of us are entitled to can be achieved only through the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. The spectre of nuclear terrorism by nations or groups cannot be erased so long as such weapons are not eradicated completely from our arsenals. Hence the need to give heed to the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, which concluded unanimously that

> "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control". (*A/51/218, annex, para. 105 (F)*)

As a nuclear-weapon State, India remains committed to the goal of global nuclear disarmament. It is in this context that my delegation will bring before this Committee once again, as it has done since 1992 after the second special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, a resolution calling for a convention to be negotiated on prohibiting the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances.

India's exercise of its nuclear option by conducting a limited series of tests in 1998 and subsequent weaponization was a decision that we were forced to take due to the nuclearization of our region and the failure of existing non-proliferation regimes to deal with this threat. It was a decision characterized by moderation and voluntary restraint. The concepts of "minimum nuclear deterrent" and "no-first-use" define our deployment posture, along with a civilian command and control structure. We realize the urgent need, pending a total ban on nuclear weapons, for all nuclear weapon States to take steps to reassure the world that they will reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. There can be no justification, in this post-post-cold war period for thousands of nuclear weapons to be maintained in a state of hair-trigger alert with possible disastrous consequences. A number of specific proposals and measures have been put forward by nations and non-governmental organizations in this regard that are worth considering. The call in the United Nations Millennium Declaration to seek and to eliminate the dangers posed by weapons of mass destruction, including by convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers, needs a positive response. Given the audacity and the scale of terrorist operations that we have witnessed in recent times, the urgency for action in this regard is even greater today than ever before. An Indian draft resolution entitled "Reducing nuclear danger" will be brought before this Committee for the fourth consecutive year in the hope that it will receive wider support and speedy follow-up action.

India's declaration of a voluntary moratorium on further underground nuclear test explosions meets the basic obligation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We are also committed to building a consensus nationally for creating a possible environment to subscribe to this Treaty. Developments in other countries have demonstrated that it is not a simple issue and that consensus-building in democracies often needs considerable patience and time. Meanwhile, we have made it clear that India will also not stand in the way of the entry-into-force of the CTBT. We would expect that other countries will adhere to the Treaty without extraneous conditions.

India is committed to participating constructively, and in good faith, in the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) negotiations, in order to develop a treaty to prohibit the future production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices, a treaty that is non-discriminatory and verifiable. This commitment had prompted India to support the compromise Amorim proposal in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which, in our view, would have paved the way for the commencement of the long-awaited negotiations, while also establishing ad hoc committees on nuclear disarmament and prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is time that the necessary political will is displayed by those countries whose ambiguous

positions have led the Conference on Disarmament to its current comatose state, so that the Conference can be activated to fulfil its intended role as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. Five years have passed without any negotiations, and prolonged discussions limited to procedural issues that are bound to remain inconclusive will weaken genuine multilateralism, which was so painstakingly developed over a period of time.

Since this Committee will process several resolutions dealing with nuclear weapon-free zones, let me reiterate that India respects the sovereign choice exercised by non-nuclear weapon States in establishing such zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, as recognized in the guidelines formulated by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1999. India is prepared to extend all necessary commitments to such nuclear weapon-free zones. We do so while recognizing that regional approaches underlying nuclear weapon-free zones cannot do justice to the concerns emanating from the global nature of the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

It is evident that existing legal instruments are inadequate to deter imminent attempts at further militarization and weaponization of outer space. Hence the need for the Conference on Disarmament to engage itself on this subject at the earliest. India was one of the sponsors of resolution 55/32, which reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. Our endeavours should aim to preserve space for the full range of cooperative, peaceful and developmental activities. Meanwhile, arms limitation and disarmament treaties need to be implemented fully and in good faith in order to contribute to stability.

A year ago this Committee recognized the need for a comprehensive approach towards missiles, in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, as a contribution to international peace and security. India is participating in the panel of governmental experts established on the basis of General Assembly resolution 55/33A, tasked to prepare a report for the consideration of the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. There is widespread recognition that club-based, discriminatory export control measures have failed to address the issue of missiles. India wishes to see the norms against the proliferation of missiles strengthened through transparent, multilateral agreements on the basis of equal and undiminished security, that also ensure that civilian space-related applications are not adversely affected.

The issue of export controls is one that goes beyond missiles to a whole range of dual-use technologies. What is needed today is an effective and transparent system of technology export controls that would be in line with the objectives of non-proliferation in all its aspects without affecting peaceful applications of these technologies. The persistence of discriminatory mechanisms, some of which may even run contrary to existing treaty provisions, deprive developing countries of the benefits of scientific and technological developments. There is an urgent need to address this critical issue, which can affect the quality of life of people all over the world, in a fair and transparent manner. It is for this purpose that India has since 1989 brought before this Committee, along with our co-sponsors, a resolution entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament".

In seeking to apply the principle of non-discrimination to disarmament instruments, we have the successful example of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). It is now the responsibility of all States parties to the CWC to ensure that all of the provisions of that Convention are fully and effectively implemented. As an original State party, India remains fully committed to this task.

India — which, like many other countries, had participated actively for about six years in the negotiations for a protocol to strengthen the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), was disappointed that the Ad Hoc Group was unable to conclude its work in time for the Fifth Review Conference planned for the end of this year. It is particularly sad that an endeavour that had come so close to a successful outcome was abandoned so abruptly, particularly when threats of bio-terrorism are becoming more likely. It is our sincere hope that the forthcoming Review Conference will succeed in maintaining the mandate for strengthening the implementation of the BWC within the framework of the Convention.

There is yet another Review Conference in the disarmament calendar this year — one which offers a

little more hope. The Second Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) not only promises to review existing provisions on excessively injurious weapons, but also presents the possibility of expanding the scope of the Convention to cover non-international armed conflicts. India has been active in the CCW process, having ratified all of its Protocols, including the Amended Protocol II on landmines.

India believes that a phased approach for a non-discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel mines that addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States will help ameliorate the critical humanitarian crises that have resulted from the irresponsible transfer and indiscriminate use of landmines. The process of the complete elimination of anti-personnel landmines will be facilitated by addressing the legitimate defence role of anti-personnel mines for operational requirements under the defence doctrines of the countries concerned, through the availability of appropriate militarily effective, non-lethal and cost-effective alternative technologies.

India participated actively in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York earlier this year. The outcome of the Conference fell far short of our expectations of dealing with the priority of breaking the nexus between small arms proliferation, international terrorism, drug smuggling, organized crime, money laundering, and the "grey markets" that feed this link. Nevertheless, the modest Programme of Action adopted by the Conference needs to be implemented expeditiously and fully as an urgent first step in the multilateral process.

This year has brought us new hopes and fears, like an interplay of light and shadows. Some of those shadows appear longer and darker, while some of the sources of light seem to recede into the distance. Prospects for a new security framework for a post-cold-war world remain distant, even as new threats highlight the need for multilateralism. A new century and a new millennium that we had hoped would begin on a note of peace, in contrast to the past century, has already been scarred by violence.

To make progress in this Committee, we need to acknowledge certain fundamentals. Peace and security are indivisible. Every nation has a claim to equal and legitimate security. Unilateralism or exclusive alliances by a select few will prove to be counter-productive. We need to work together, using non-discriminatory and transparent approaches in a truly multilateral and inclusive manner, in order to seek the peace and security that we all deserve. This is necessary if we are to emerge from the shadows of vulnerability and fear into the light of confidence and hope.

In conclusion, let me also take this opportunity, through you, Mr. Chairman, to convey our congratulations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the United Nations, for the richly deserved Nobel Peace Prize. We are sure that this will encourage both the Secretary-General and this Organization to redouble their efforts to achieve the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons, a goal that is so deeply cherished yet has been so elusive. Indeed, there could be no better gift to succeeding generations, and, dare I say, it is one that would guarantee the next Nobel Peace Prize also for this Organization.

Mr. Al-Shamsi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to congratulate you most sincerely on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We are confident that your extensive diplomatic experience will contribute to the success of our deliberations and will serve to forge a greater consensus on disarmament and on the strengthening of international security. We wish you and the members of your Bureau every success.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, the Chairman of the previous session, as well as the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and his Department, for the efforts they have exerted, and continue to exert, to develop mechanisms for international cooperation in the field of disarmament and of the maintenance of international peace and security.

I should like also to take this opportunity to convey our sincere congratulations to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and to the staff of the United Nations for having recently been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001. This attests to the international community's genuine respect and admiration for the great achievements they have recorded towards safeguarding international security and promoting the

culture of peace, coexistence and tolerance among nations.

We deeply regret that the level of international cooperation in the field of disarmament is quite low and disappointing, whereas military budgets and expenditures continue to increase at an alarming rate. Furthermore, nuclear-weapons tests and tests of other prohibited weapons continue, both overtly and covertly, in many States, despite the continued efforts of the United Nations, over a period of many years, to address the reasons for military confrontations and deadly wars.

There has also been a notable increase in arms smuggling, in the illegal and irresponsible possession of certain dangerous weapons, and in the number of wars and conflicts. New and more dangerous phenomena have emerged that affect the security of States and their citizens, such as international terrorism, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other factors that threaten the regional and international security balance of our contemporary world.

The recent report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly estimates that annual global military expenditures exceed $800 billion, or 80 per cent of average cold-war global military expenditures. At the same time, we have witnessed a notable decrease in the level of official and unofficial financial assistance to developing countries. These statistics not only reflected the pessimism and dangers that shroud our world, but also clearly embodied the oscillation in strategic relations among States, the intensification of hot spots and heightened fear and insecurity among peoples — to the detriment of various development plans and international efforts designed to curb poverty, epidemics, human rights violations, the deterioration of the environment and other scourges.

Our objective observation of these approaches and situations — which can under no circumstances be dealt with separately from an understanding of the common framework of their causes and motives — prompts us to call upon the international community to set a binding international strategy for security cooperation among all States, whose components are based on the principles of international law, the Charter, resolutions, agreements, conventions and protocols of the United Nations that do not discriminate between States and peoples. Such a strategy should at the same time guarantee transparency in respecting the sovereignty of States and their national and regional security, non-interference in their internal affairs, the legitimate right to self-defence, the defeat of aggression and the end of the occupation of their lands.

The international community continues to witness an accelerated race to develop strategic nuclear reactors for military purposes and increase the range and power of ballistic missiles and rockets with nuclear, chemical and biological warheads — despite the pledges of the heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit last year for, among other things, the gradual multilateral reduction of arsenals of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Not only has this escalation in strategic armaments contributed to the failure of the current negotiations and efforts — whether bilateral, regional or within the framework of the disarmament conventions aimed at achieving the cherished international goals of nuclear non-proliferation and international disarmament — but it also encourages many non-nuclear-weapon States, especially in regions in which there are tensions and conflicts, such as South Asia, the Arabian Gulf and other areas, to carry out nuclear tests and engage in a race to possess, transfer, produce and stockpile nuclear and fissile material, because of their subjective concepts of security deterrence. This matter is of great concern to us, and we strongly reject it because it is a serious and fundamental factor that reflects the escalation of tensions, the absence of confidence-building measures and the increase in conflicts among States. Accordingly, we call upon these States to reconsider and alter their positions in this regard, to exercise self-restraint and to take peaceful, negotiated measures to resolve their regional conflicts. We call again upon the nuclear-weapon States to shoulder their full responsibilities in implementing their obligations as stipulated in the series of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation treaties and protocols that call for multilateral, gradual and systematic reductions in their strategic military arsenals. We also stress the need to establish specialized mechanisms, emerging from the disarmament conventions, to follow up the efforts made to gradually eliminate nuclear weapons within a set time frame, as set out in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and also to conclude an unconditional international instrument that provides security assurances for non-nuclear countries.

While many regional and subregional efforts in recent decades succeeded in establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones — thanks to the cooperation of States that understand the inevitability of peaceful and secure coexistence, and thus serve the common interests of their peoples — we find that the Middle East is still unable to realize this hope. This is because the Israeli Government continues to possess nuclear military reactors outside the framework of the international safeguards system so as to guarantee its military superiority and the continuation of its occupation and illegal utilization of Palestinian and Arab lands, in disregard of the principles of international law and legitimate international resolutions that prohibit all these hostile acts and policies that threaten regional and international peace and security.

The United Arab Emirates, which joined the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), in order to reinforce its international position, believes that establishing zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is the key to establishing balances in international and regional strategic relations. We again call upon the international community, and the super-Powers in particular, to put pressure on the Israeli Government to unconditionally join the NPT, as it is the only State in the area that has not yet done so, and to call for it to abandon the possession of such dangerous installations and work towards complete submission to the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in accordance with the relevant legitimate international resolutions and other resolutions issued by the sixth NPT Review Conference, in 2000. In this framework, we also call for the discontinuation of all financial, technological and scientific aid used in developing Israel's dangerous nuclear installations, which threaten not only the peace efforts and attempts to find a solution to the Palestine question and the Middle East problem, but also the security, stability and real interests of the peoples in the area and their natural, economic and environmental resources.

My country, which supports the international efforts to establish peace in the hot spots of the world and provides all kinds of relief, aid and reconstruction assistance to national establishments destroyed by wars — for example, in the occupied Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Somalia — calls upon the international community to enhance dialogue and the mechanisms for conflict resolution and confidence-building, and to establish preventive diplomacy, combat the illegal trafficking of small arms and strengthen efforts to resolve the problems of anti-personnel mines and other obstacles to peace. But at the same time we reiterate that establishing international and regional peace, security and stability is the joint and complete responsibility of the nuclear States. Therefore, we urge those States to start serious multilateral negotiations in order to enhance their political will to finally and completely eliminate their nuclear arsenals and stockpiles. This will contribute to the creation of an international environment that is free of all forms of threats, where all human, economic and environmental resources are conducive to the full use of development plans, human interests and prosperity.

Mr. Šerkšnys (Lithuania): Allow me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you wholeheartedly upon your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are well aware of your expertise in the field of disarmament and arms control and of your diplomatic skills. I wish to assure you of our unconditional support in the discharge of your important task. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

I would like also to extend our heartfelt sympathies to the people of the United States and to the other States whose citizens perished in the heinous terrorist attacks of 11 September.

Lithuania has fully associated itself with the statement delivered by Belgium on behalf of the European Union. I take this opportunity to elaborate on certain issues of importance to my country.

The beginning of the twenty-first century might well be judged by future historians as the time when a united world took bold moves to redress the legal, moral and ethical incoherence of the twentieth century. Unilateralism, deterrence, strategic equilibrium or, indeed, many hitherto seemingly indispensable notions of modern statesmanship, have been shelved or dispensed with in the face of a menace that is more mature, deep-rooted, ominous and gruesome — a menace without a face that does not respect borders and aims at high-value targets. All nations have put their minds together to trim the deepest roots of spreading international terrorism. The abundance of weapons of mass destruction, missiles, conventional

military hardware and small arms has suddenly become a deadly liability within the easy reach of villains.

The events of 11 September have struck at the core values cherished by the international community: openness, freedom, tolerance and democracy. I cannot help but underscore a task laid out by the Secretary-General in defence of those values, namely, to develop a broad, comprehensive and sustained strategy to combat terrorism. While that fight will be long and multifaceted, an impact on disarmament will be obvious. As Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala put it the other day,

> "there is no going back to business as usual." (*A/C.1/56/PV.3*)

Lithuania fully concurs with the view of the Secretary-General that there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorist acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. That is a stark recognition of the fact that the achievements in non-proliferation thus far have been mixed at best. Many of the non-proliferation and arms control regimes and instruments lack universal adherence or appear to be outdated and hardly designed to zero in on non-traditional threats posed by non-State actors.

Humankind is all the more vulnerable today for being capable of mass producing nuclear warheads, deadly bacteria, chemical agents, missiles, highly enriched uranium and radioactive materials. Technology and mass production continue to slip away from political, legal and moral control. Global military expenditures are again on the rise. Worse, the threat of annihilation engendered by the existence of nuclear weapons appears to have been firmly codified in the back of many people's minds.

It is true that we have lately been encouraged by the fact that the views of both the United States and the Russian Federation are converging on significantly lower levels of nuclear arsenals. It is true that we have been heartened by the progress in scrapping long-range missiles and launch silos under START I, and by the ratification of START II by the Russian Federation. It is also true that we have been supportive of the United States-Russian dialogue on strategic stability.

Still, the asymmetry of modern warfare, the existence of shadowy guerrillas with global reach, and the vulnerability of nuclear devices to theft or unauthorized use or simply to the chance that a madman might get his hands on them are today more than ever before eroding the logic and rationale behind the justifications for thousands of weapons designated for mutual assured destruction. What the world needs instead is mutual assured peace. I am hopeful that reductions in nuclear weapons will be verifiable and irreversible, that the role of nuclear weapons in security policies will be diminished, and that transparency will be given more than just lip service.

I also harbour the hope that the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) will not go by unnoticed. Without universal application of the Treaty's provisions, the sustainable implementation of its main objectives may prove to be perilously elusive. We want no more tests. That is why we appeal to the 13 States whose ratifications are still outstanding to take the necessary steps to ratify.

Equally perilous is the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. It is a pity for the Conference to be haggling over its programme of work while turning a deaf ear to the issue of fissile materials, which continue to pile up and can spread unchecked. Yet, it is hoped that the negotiation on a fissile material cut-off treaty will get off the ground sooner rather than later. Carrying out the long overdue review of the Conference's agenda, revamping its functioning and expanding its membership may well free that body of its cold war tendencies. We do not believe that disarmament has run its course in Geneva. The events of 11 September have underscored the need for a forceful response from the Conference on Disarmament.

Nuclear weapons have so far been, and will probably remain, out of the reach of terrorists and non-State actors. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), export controls and a number of international conventions have made their crucial contribution to that end. Still, confidence in the other regimes such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) can hardly continue indefinitely, unless a renewed worldwide political commitment to both regimes is extended without delay.

The Chemical Weapons Convention's verification regime, which is probably the most complex regime, has made an outstanding contribution to international and regional peace and security. Three challenges must

be vigorously addressed in ensuring that chemicals are not weaponized and used in a terror attack: the universalization, strict application and funding of the CWC regime. Universal adherence will tighten the screws of the regime. Strict application and implementation of all the provisions, including those related to assistance, will solidify the confidence of all States parties. Adequate funding is also needed in order not to compromise the capacities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to carry out its mandated activities in a robust and efficient manner.

Of greater concern is the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention — the weakest link in the system of regimes to prohibit weapons of mass destruction. Development in such areas as defence, preparedness, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism have not eliminated the *raison d'être* for a verification regime that can play a useful and cost-effective role, particularly in the light of mounting concerns about the possible use of bio-weapons in terrorism.

Arguably, few developments in the area of arms control have stirred more concern lately than the proliferation of long and medium-range missile know-how. More than ever before, we have before us the challenge of stopping the spread of the means to deliver weapons of mass destruction. The regime against the proliferation of such weapons is riddled with holes. We therefore support stepping up anti-proliferation diplomacy. The creation of the United Nations Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles in All Their Aspects is just one welcome development. The universalization of the draft international code of conduct drawn up by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is another crucial endeavour, not in the least because the power of that regime must match the power and ranges of missiles.

The fight against terrorism will have an immense effect on every dimension of arms control and non-proliferation. Small arms are no exception. The 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was an important step in mapping out the strategy to combat this proliferation. While recognizing that the problem of small arms is not amenable to a quick-fix solution, it is now important to follow through as quickly as possible with the measures agreed in the Programme of Action and to continue to build upon them as a follow-up process. Of no less importance is the elimination of glaring loopholes, such as the unregulated brokering, financing and transportation of small arms. It is equally necessary to increase transparency, bolster arms embargoes and develop an international code of conduct on arms transfers.

Lithuania, for its part, has been working closely with the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization with the aim of putting in place stringent national legislation, developing export controls, strengthening border controls and improving stockpile management. We abide by the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports and will shortly start exchanging information on the import and export of small arms under the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

While the small arms issue appeared on the international agenda only fairly recently, anti-personnel landmines have already acquired the status of a preventable disease. The Ottawa Convention is a tremendous success in the making, both as a means of eliminating stockpiles of landmines worldwide and as a powerful vehicle for demining and rehabilitation and the implementation of mine awareness programmes. Lithuania, as a signatory State, sees great value in the Convention and provides practical support for its main goals. In order to give currency to our intentions, we are considering the possibility of submitting, on a voluntary basis, our initial national report under article 7 of the Convention.

We also attach particular importance to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The extension of the applicability of the whole Convention to non-international armed conflicts is a very pertinent and timely proposal, given the shifting nature of conflicts. We also support addressing the issue of explosive remnants of war, in the context of strengthening the Convention.

Time is of the essence. If we are to start building a more secure world based on a culture of peace, we had better make use of this window of opportunity. History will judge us by our deeds, not our words. Lithuania trusts that at this session, the First Committee will be able to muster the necessary political will and unity in the pursuit of a world that is not a danger to itself. To that end, we remain committed to strengthening arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

Mr. Hussein (Ethiopia): On behalf of the Ethiopian delegation, I would like to extend sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. We are confident that you will be able to effectively steer the Committee's work to a successful conclusion, and we wish to assure you of our delegation's fullest cooperation. Our congratulations are also extended to the other members of the Bureau. In addition, we would like to commend the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, for his inspiring remarks, which we hope will stimulate us to tackle the challenges ahead energetically and promote the disarmament agenda of the United Nations.

The conclusion of the cold war era has by no means freed us from a fear of threats to international peace and security. Instead, the world today is moving into an era in which a new type of warfare is emerging, and the challenges which we are currently facing are multidimensional in scope. The unimaginable and inhumane terrorist acts orchestrated against a multinational civilian population on 11 September will forever be embedded in our minds. As we remember those horrendous acts, we must not let our spirits be dampened. Instead, we must endeavour to renew our energy to confront these challenges with energy so as to dismantle the various deadly sources of threats to international peace and security.

The international community has a major responsibility to reduce the vulnerability of the civilian population throughout the world to such acts of violence and terror. The potential threat of nuclear and chemical warfare is, indeed, a lingering fear, and in an effort to eradicate this fear, the international community must prioritize its work in the urgent and active pursuit of a vigorous disarmament agenda. It is, therefore, my delegation's hope that during this session the First Committee will be instrumental in achieving the Organization's goal of consolidating peace and security through international cooperation.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues to be a major concern. The Ethiopian Government calls upon the international community to continue moving forward in its battle to end such proliferation and to develop strategies to achieve the ultimate goal of disarmament.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the backbone of the international community's strategy in the pursuit of the total elimination of nuclear weapons leading to nuclear disarmament, and my country, Ethiopia, continues to support and encourage the States parties to the NPT to seriously address the issue of universality. This objective should be earnestly pursued in our global campaign to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The consensus reached at the NPT Review Conference in 2000 was, indeed, commendable. The agreement reached on issues such as nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, nuclear safety and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy was indicative of the further strengthening of the Treaty's review process. Unfortunately, however, the Final Document did not resolve the differences in a number of areas. There remains a wide diversity of views between the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States. Nevertheless, it is hoped that future review conferences will make further progress in attaining a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a crucial instrument of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, especially in the context of curtailing the development of nuclear weapons. In recognition of the lack of a full complement of ratifying States to that Treaty, Ethiopia acknowledges the importance of maintaining the current moratorium on nuclear testing, pending the Treaty's entry into force. Nevertheless, we are also confident that the upcoming conference will provide the opportunity for generating renewed efforts for its entry into force.

Ethiopia expresses its deep concern over the lack of progress made by the Conference on Disarmament, which further inhibits movement on global security and disarmament. The deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament is a major setback to launching negotiations on the mandate which was approved in 1995. We therefore appeal to Member States to urgently overcome the obstacles in an effort to streamline the work of the Conference on Disarmament and facilitate its programme of work.

Another crucial aspect of the global menace to international peace and security is the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which continues to be a primary threat to security and to endanger the lives of civilians throughout the world. The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and

Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, demonstrated the international community's continuing efforts and commitment to combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We commend the success of the Conference and the consensus on the formulation of an international Programme of Action, which is a significant first step towards the goal of preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

My delegation, however, also believes that it is of paramount importance for Member States and their civil societies, as well as the regional and international organizations, to consolidate their efforts and mobilize their resources towards facilitating the full implementation of the agreed Programme of Action. We also firmly believe that the role of the United Nations is pivotal in overseeing the implementation of the agreed measures, as well as establishing a mechanism for follow-up action.

Ethiopia commends the Nicaraguan Government for hosting the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, which was held in Managua, Nicaragua, from 18 to 21 September. This Convention undoubtedly provided a comprehensive framework to eliminate anti-personnel landmines, provide relief to mine victims and ameliorate the conditions of mine-affected communities.

The eradication of landmines is indeed a very important disarmament activity, in our view. The use of landmines has serious social and economic consequences for the populations of mine-affected countries, as is clearly demonstrated by the prolonged pain and suffering endured by millions of innocent civilians.

Ethiopia fully recognizes the gravity of the problem of landmines and unexploded ordnance. Thus, it has identified mine action as one of its priority areas. In this regard, the Government of Ethiopia, together with the United Nations Development Programme technical assistance team, has established a Mine Action Office and a demining training centre as part of a national mine action framework.

In conclusion, let me commend the United Nations and the Secretary-General for the award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, of which they may feel proud. This achievement is a symbolic reminder of the successes we have achieved together so far in our arduous efforts to maintain peace throughout the world. Our goal, nevertheless, remains largely unaccomplished. However, it is hoped that the Nobel Peace Prize will serve as a motivational tool so that we may continue to strive relentlessly to achieve peace amid the upsurge of new dimensions to the challenges we currently face in bringing out a peaceful world.

Mr. Kerim (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): At the outset, I should like to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at this very important juncture, and to express our confidence that under your able guidance the Committee will successfully conclude its work this year. In this matter, you can count on our delegation's full support. My congratulations go to the other members of the Bureau as well.

I would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, for his thought-provoking comments at the beginning of our deliberations. It gives me pleasure to join all the previous speakers who have welcomed the presence of Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala and Special Envoy Petrovsky at this session.

The news of the award of the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations and its Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in two equal parts, news that has spread throughout the world, was more than thrilling for all of us who, in one way or another, share responsibility for the work of the Organization. Congratulating wholeheartedly the United Nations and Secretary-General Annan once more on this outstanding recognition, I emphasize how much we share the view of the Nobel Prize Committee that

> "the only negotiable route to global peace and cooperation goes by way of the United Nations."

May these words be perceived not only as acknowledgement of the work of the United Nations so far, but also as a signpost for its future endeavours, which should rely more on unorthodox remedies rather than conventional solutions.

The tragic events of 11 September point to the sober reality that disarmament and non-proliferation regimes promoted on a multilateral and general basis are more necessary than ever today, in order to prevent

terrorists and their organizations having access to more powerful means of carrying out their unspeakable acts.

We note with the deepest concern the close connections between international terrorism and the illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other deadly materials, as a paramount threat to international peace and security at the dawn of the new millennium. An urgent and effective response by the international community to this global threat is a must, and how to articulate this necessity in our deliberations in the First Committee should be, in our view, a priority.

The bitter experience of the South-Eastern European region in the past decade, including the most recent events in my country, the Republic of Macedonia, is yet more proof of close interlinkages between international terrorism and illegal arms trafficking, organized crime, drug trafficking and money-laundering.

In our view, one of the main reasons for the present unsatisfactory developments and the lag in disarmament and arms control processes is that we have not truly managed to establish and develop the agenda for those processes in conjunction with the international agenda for the maintenance of international peace and security and development as a whole. If this trend persists, if the present lack of political will and readiness to move the disarmament process forward continues and existing divisions prevail, there will realistically be less hope that disarmament and arms control can assist in meeting the goal set by the world leaders in the Millennium Declaration — to establish a just and lasting peace in the world, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. This is not the time for business as usual in dealing with non-proliferation and disarmament; on the contrary, concerted action is needed in order to achieve meaningful progress.

We are deeply concerned that the Conference on Disarmament remains deadlocked and has not managed to achieve any substantial negotiations, in spite of the progress achieved at the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. The newly emerging international resolve should be channelled to break the stalemate, and thus meet the growing need for new arrangements on nuclear disarmament, fissile materials and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The approach to the Conference's work is outmoded, suited to the past period of cold war and coexistence, not to the age of cooperation, integration and globalization. The Conference should therefore change its methods of work and become universal.

My delegation would like to stress the importance of universal adherence to, and full compliance with, the NPT. We are hopeful that the preparatory process to begin next year will lead to a successful Review Conference in 2005.

The Republic of Macedonia attaches greatest importance to achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and is disappointed that it is not yet in force. However, it is encouraging to see that the number of parties to the CTBT has increased. The forthcoming Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, pursuant to article XIV of the Treaty, will, in our view, be instrumental in achieving this goal. In the meantime, it is of crucial importance to maintain the moratorium on nuclear testing, pending the entry into force of the CTBT.

My delegation welcomes the intensive consultations between Russia and the United States on the possible adaptation of the global strategic framework to the new circumstances and emerging threats. We share the views expressed by many delegations that, if the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems is to be amended or replaced, it should be for the reason that the new strategic framework makes at least a comparably strong and effective contribution to maintaining global security and stability.

The recent terrorist attacks in the United States also point to the urgency of ensuring full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and reinforcement of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), as well as achieving their universality, in order to counter effectively the new threats of misuse of those weapons for terrorist aims, a possibility that became less remote to all of us after 11 September. The first test of such resolve will be the Fifth Review Conference of the States parties to the BWC to be held in November of this year in Geneva. These international efforts, however, will only be effective if coupled with the same determination at the national level, through increased preparedness and the adjustment of national legislation to that end.

The Republic of Macedonia welcomes the Programme of Action adopted at the recent United Nations Conference on Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July of this year, as a good starting point to build upon with effective follow-up at the global, regional and national levels. Within the United Nations framework, we are looking forward to the response of the Secretary-General and the Security Council's expression of its readiness to be closely involved. The problem of the illicit traffic in and the circulation of small arms and light weapons within the region of Southeastern Europe is of particular concern for the Republic of Macedonia, especially after the 1997 civilian unrest in Albania and the conflict in Kosovo; it poses a serious threat not only to the security and stability of my country but to the broader region as well, particularly through its severe, adverse impact on economic, social and human development. We urge the countries in the region to take effective measures to combat this problem and support programmes and projects aimed at the collection and safe destruction of surplus stocks of small arms and light weapons.

My delegation congratulates the Government of Nicaragua for the recent, successful organizing of the Third Meeting of the States Parties to the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines. As a State party to the Convention, we remain strongly committed to the Ottawa process. The strengthening of this process, in our view, should be measured not only by the increase in the number of signatories, i.e. greater universality, but, even more, by the enduring abandonment of the use of these callous devices by State and non-State actors. My delegation welcomes regional and international efforts in support of mine clearance, assistance to victims and mine-awareness programmes in affected countries in Southeastern Europe.

My delegation is encouraged by the growing number of States providing information to the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms on their military holdings and procurement through national production — the Republic of Macedonia, again, is one of them, thus helping lift the veil of secrecy in this field.

Let me conclude by informing you that the delegation of the Republic of Macedonia will this year, once again, together with other delegations, submit a resolution on the maintenance of international security, good-neighbourliness, stability and development in Southeastern Europe. The resolution addresses the complexity of the problems of disarmament, stability and development in this troubled region. The thrust of this resolution is to introduce a culture of good-neighbourliness and integration — which has proven to be very much alive, notwithstanding the recent events in my country. The intention is to have the First Committee adopt the resolution by consensus, and, in that spirit, we welcome suggestions to improve the text.

Mr. Issacharoff (Israel): Allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the demanding but distinguished task of guiding the work of the Committee. Bearing in mind the considerable work ahead of us, I am certain that you will be equal to all the challenges at hand. Please be assured of my delegation's fullest cooperation in this important international endeavour. I would also like to acknowledge the presence of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, who contributes to our joint work in such an essential way.

On a more sombre note, I would like at the outset to take this opportunity to express to the United States delegation our profound condolences for the thousands of Americans so callously killed by the unprecedented and outrageous terrorist attacks on 11 September. The people of New York and Washington D.C., who bore the brunt of this incredible barbarism with such dignity and heroism, have shown the world that terror can never overcome the human spirit.

Those responsible for this cowardly act sought to decimate and destroy. The American people, fortified by values that all democratic nations cherish, will overcome and defeat this affront to humanity. As they meet this challenge, our solidarity with the people of America has no limit or qualification. Indeed, we view the measures taken by the United States over the last few days as being fully consonant with the right of self-defence enshrined in the United Nations Charter and in international law.

As we hold our deliberations under the shadow of these horrendous acts, it is clear that the substance of our work is affected by the deeper implications of what has transpired. These events have changed the parameters of our thinking as we try to gauge the current strategic challenge to international peace and security that terror presents.

Terrorism has become a global threat. It is a strategic weapon that not only attacks the fabric of freedom and democracy but also undermines our basic assumptions regarding the use of military force and the nature of enemies. If the classic philosophers of war described war as politics by other means and as a dialectical process that defines the relations between enemies, the dynamics of terror require an entirely new thought process.

It is a war in which the enemy lives in shadows, even within our own societies. The conflict is, in his eyes, absolute, and there is no room for any manner of compromise. Terror does not take issue with people's politics; it assails their very existence. It does so, not by military arms in the field of battle, but rather by targeting defenceless civilians as a tool of intimidation and chaos. It transforms a civilian airliner into a manned missile of death. It does not seek to create an alternative credible reality, but rather, a reflection of its own fanaticism.

There are no more any imaginary scenarios, and the international community must now address a profound and unequivocal challenge to global stability, with all its ramifications around the world. If we do not adjust our thinking, our conventional wisdom may become immaterial. We must prepare for every eventuality, for there are none that we can now afford to ignore.

For some countries like my own, this new global reality adds another complex dimension to a regional stability that has always been fragile at best. We are already confronting an intense combination of threats across the spectrum of our national security, from terror, to increasingly sophisticated conventional arms, to the growing threat of weapons of mass-destruction and ballistic missiles. These threats oblige extensive preparation to prevent the exposure and vulnerability of our citizens to imminent and potential dangers.

Suicide bombers, cross-border terrorist and rocket attacks and potential missile bombardments of the type we endured in the Gulf War are all directed at our civilian population. The appropriate countermeasures and preparations can be active or passive and entail a considerable demand on our quality of life and national resources, bearing in mind the nature of the enemy, the type of conflict he espouses and the capabilities he still seeks. We shall continue to take the necessary steps to ensure our security.

States, however, should also contend, where possible, with threats through diplomatic and normative action. Numerous international conventions, regional agreements, bilateral treaties and even unilateral policies should seek to enhance security between States and to reduce tensions.

In the realm of diplomacy, Israel continues to view the regional context as a primary and essential framework to forward critical arms control measures predicated on a comprehensive and durable peace in the area of the Middle East. Indeed, after the Madrid Conference in 1991, a working group for arms control and regional security was established and quickly became an important regional forum for addressing security issues. Unfortunately, these activities were discontinued by 1995 by other countries in the region.

In recent years, Israel has sought to lay the enduring foundations of peace in our region based on an historic reconciliation embodying the notions of compromise, mutual trust and respect, open borders and good-neighbourliness. The basis for coexistence between Israel and its neighbours was laid in the bilateral peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan and we still hope to widen this process to encompass the Palestinians, Lebanon and Syria.

Relations of peace will put an end to arms races in our region and lead to reductions, to the minimal levels required for national self-defence, of standing military forces, defence expenditures and conventional arms. Effective arms control measures can only be achieved and sustained in a region where wars, armed conflicts, terror, political hostility, incitement and non-recognition are not features of everyday life.

Accordingly, the political reality in our region mandates a practical step-by-step approach, culminating in a comprehensive peace and the eventual establishment of a mutually verifiable zone free of ballistic missiles and of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. This zone should emanate from and encompass all the States of the region by virtue of free and direct negotiations between them. It is in this spirit that Israel has been part of the consensus in the First Committee for over 20 years on the resolution regarding the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We hope that this consensus will be preserved once again this year. In any event, I would like to emphasize that Israel has not weakened

in its overall resolve to realize this vision of peace and stability through diplomatic means.

Notwithstanding the lack of progress at the regional level, Israel attempted during the past decade to become more involved in the normative framework of international arms control efforts. It was in this spirit that Israel signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993 and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 and ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in 1995.

Israel has adhered to the provisions of the Missile Technology Control Regime, respected the other supplier regimes and participated in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Over the past year, Israel was an active participant in the international effort in the United Nations and in other international forums to reduce the proliferation of ballistic missiles and their related technology. We also attach importance to the recent United Nations deliberations on the illicit trafficking of small arms and hope that the implementation of the Programme of Action will contribute to the global fight against terror.

Israel has taken these steps in parallel with its efforts to advance the peace process with its Arab neighbours. This has also been at a time when existential threats to Israel in the Middle East are emerging from other countries seeking to develop long-range ballistic missiles and capabilities in other weapons of mass destruction, in conjunction with their extreme political hostility and antagonism to my country. We cannot forget that the use of chemical weapons by countries in the Middle East against civilian populations is a matter of historical record.

In that context, we would point out that Iraq has yet to comply with all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. Indeed, the prevention of Iraq's reconstituting its weapons of mass destruction and missile capabilities will remain a critical strategic factor in the quest for any regional stability in the Middle East.

In addition, Iran has done nothing to conceal its unconditional hostility towards my country's existence or the fact that it is procuring ballistic missiles capable of reaching Israel and beyond. I would recall that, in this Committee last year, I stated that Israel has no dispute with the Iranian people and seeks no conflict with the Iranian Government. Iran, for its part, has continued to develop its weapons of mass destruction and missile programmes, to assist and encourage the terrorist group Hezbollah's attempts to destabilize our border with Lebanon and actively to oppose any attempt to further peace between Israel and its neighbours.

Today, we are facing, as are many other States within the region and beyond, a more comprehensive and almost overwhelming security challenge than we have known to date. This occurs at a time when it is clear that there are insufficient regional mechanisms to contend with and reduce the overall array of threats, either in their physical or political sense.

In this context, one of the resolutions of the First Committee that serve no useful or constructive purpose is submitted under the agenda item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This resolution seeks to single out Israel on a matter that is central to its national security, totally ignoring the immense security problems and the inherent instability of the Middle East. It also chooses to ignore the profound hostility to Israel of certain countries that continue to reject any form of peaceful reconciliation and coexistence. If anyone supports this resolution believing that it in any way alleviates the acute and pressing security needs of the region, they are doing themselves and the peoples of the region a grave disservice.

An alternative and far better approach would be to consider ideas and initiatives that actually improve the situation on the ground. We hope that our neighbours will become partners to rebuilding a regional mechanism for consultation on arms control and regional security matters and also view the adoption of confidence-building measures in a more positive light. Confidence-building measures are not a prize for one side, but rather an essential means of reducing tensions and misunderstandings, particularly in times of crisis. They most definitely have a role to play today.

While we by no means have all the answers and solutions, we believe that the international community must do more to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, particularly to those States that seek these capabilities and actively sponsor and support terrorist groups. We must spare no effort to exclude this proliferation and the terrorist use of such weapons. We are at a juncture where the proponents of proliferation, terror and weapons of mass

destruction could seek to combine their resources in a fusion between mass destruction and fanaticism. We must prevent them from achieving this ultimate evil.

Terrorism at any level can never be tolerated in any political process or as part of diplomacy. The fight against terror is indivisible. Those who seek to justify terror in one form or another will have the effect of perpetuating it. Any such justification will also undermine the unity of action needed to defeat this affliction of the modern age. The terrorist has chosen this absolute war and it is the terrorist who must accept the absolute response.

Furthermore, as countries that may tend to disagree on a range of diverse issues, we must for once join together in acknowledging that this new array of threats endangers the entire fabric of global stability and all countries that pursue moderation, coexistence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. We regard Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) as an important first step in this regard. We cannot ignore the potential of these threats to change the nature of societies. We have already seen their intense impact on critical aspects of international life over the last weeks.

Recently I have thought much of how Raymond Aron described the human condition in the first two world wars. He observed that

> "Man, without being in uniform, was defending his soul. The victory of either side signified, or seemed to signify, a conversion of souls by force".

Those words recall the darkest hours of the last century and are a testament of what is at stake today. In this battle between souls, there can be no neutral ground.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are entirely confident that, under your wise leadership, our deliberations will be crowned with success. My congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

The United Nations agenda accords high priority to the goal of complete disarmament. Since the first session of the General Assembly, the United Nations has worked towards complete nuclear disarmament. But a review of what has been achieved to date in the field of disarmament shows that this falls far short of mankind's aspirations — especially today when, more than ever before, mankind is threatened by nuclear holocaust. Such threats to international peace and security have increased since the end of the cold war.

In addition to the continuing, escalating international and regional arms race, we see aggression, foreign occupation, interference in the internal affairs of States and the perpetual unilateral use of force. We also see policies of hegemony, violations of the Charter and of international law, and the imposition of inhumane sanctions. These are now central and prominent features of a unipolar order controlled by an arrogant Power whose sole aim is to control the world so that it can impose hegemony and its own ideas and concepts.

What Iraq has been subjected to for more than a decade exemplifies the disastrous consequences of the prevalence of brute force in international relations. For example, the United States of America and the United Kingdom imposed a no-fly zone in northern Iraq in 1991 and on southern Iraq in 1992, expanding the latter in 1996. The purpose was to attain objectives that have absolutely nothing to do with Security Council resolutions. Indeed, the imposition of the zones violated the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, said on 27 June 2001:

> "You know my position on this, and I have indicated that when you analyse and read the Security Council resolutions I do not see the Security Council resolutions as a basis for [the imposition of no-fly zones]". (*Press release SG/SM/7865, 27 June 2001*)

His predecessor, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, said that the United States claim that Security Council resolution 688 (1991) gives the right to establish no-fly zones was baseless. Moreover, since the official ceasefire established in accordance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991), the United States has committed five broad aggressions against my country. The first was in January 1993, and others followed in June 1993, September 1996, December 1998 and February 2001. There was no Security Council authorization for these. That is in addition to the continued daily aggressive actions by the United Kingdom and the United States, which have been condemned by the international community, including other members of the Security Council.

To this we must add the funding, support and training of terrorist groups whose purpose is to destabilize Iraq, threaten its territorial integrity, and undermine its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as the premeditated destruction of the lives of Iraqi citizens, infrastructure and civil institutions. The United States position was reflected in the stance taken by that country at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. That country rejected references in the Programme of Action to limiting the trade in small arms and light weapons to States. That position opens the door to the transfer of such weapons to non-State actors such as secessionist movements, rebel movements, terrorists and criminals all over the world. At a time when everybody is talking about combating terrorism, that State harbours, funds and trains terrorists, and enacts national legislation calling for a change in the political system of another country, allocating some $97 million for that purpose. Is that position in conformity with international law? What is terrorism? Is that not terrorism?

The United States of America and the United Kingdom used depleted uranium shells extensively against Iraq in 1991, and used them again against Yugoslavia in 1999.

The depleted uranium represents a generation of radiological weapons that destroy life and the environment for future generations where it is used. It also has toxic and chemical effects, according to reports of the World Health Organization (WHO). The use of depleted uranium shells against Iraq has led to a great increase in cancer cases, miscarriages and birth deformities, particularly in Iraq's southern provinces, where this weapon was used. It has led to a disaster in health and in the Iraqi environment, and its impact will continue far into the future. It also led to the death of more than 50,000 children in the first year, 1991, and it hit thousands of British and American soldiers with what is now called "the Gulf War syndrome".

The United States and Great Britain used over 300 tons of depleted uranium munitions in their aggression against Iraq in 1991. They also used more than 10 tons of the same material in Kosovo in 1999. This terrible weapon hit North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) soldiers who were participating in the military operations there and suffered various kinds of diseases as a result of exposure to depleted uranium radiation.

According to scientific reports, these shells will pollute the areas in which they were used, the land on which human beings, flora and fauna live, for about five million years and will lead to the death of thousands of people directly or indirectly exposed to their dangerous radiation.

In view of the danger caused by this weapon and its negative effects on the environment and on human beings, my delegation believes that it is high time for the First Committee to study this question very seriously, and the international community should start negotiations immediately in the Conference on Disarmament in order to develop an international treaty to ban the development, production, stockpiling and use of munitions of depleted uranium and radiological weapons and to destroy whatever stocks exist of these weapons.

Unlike what the previous speaker said, Iraq has implemented its commitments under section C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991). Most countries, including three permanent members of the Security Council, have acknowledged that Iraq has actually implemented paragraphs 8 to 13 of resolution 687 (1991) relating to disarmament. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has also acknowledged this fact, as have many of the former inspectors of the defunct Special Commission, including the famous Scott Ritter, who wrote in the June 2000 issue of *Arms Control Today* magazine that Iraq has been disarmed since the beginning of 1998 in a manner never before seen in history. Thus, and in accordance with the same resolution, what is required now is that the Security Council carry out its commitments and implement paragraphs 14, 21 and 22 of the same resolution.

In view of what I have just said, Iraq will not accept anything less than the total lifting of the unjust blockade imposed upon it and the implementation of paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991), which refers to the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction. Any proposal or tendency that does not include the implementation of paragraph 14 of the resolution and that does not bind and commit the Zionist entity and other countries will not be accepted by Iraq, because this is an essential question for Iraq and for the Arab nation. Iraq will never accept a re-writing of Security Council resolutions and will reject any resolution that does not restore its full legitimate rights.

Our Arab region suffers from a great imbalance in armaments. The Zionist entity that occupies Palestine possesses all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. The same entity is developing these weapons with direct support from and the cooperation of the United States of America and other countries in violation of the commitments they made under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This racist entity is number six on the list of those who possess nuclear weapons. Its possession of weapons of mass destruction is coupled with its expansionist policy at the expense of Arab land in Lebanon and Syria and its continued aggression against the Palestinian people, thereby subjecting the whole area to great danger.

Security and stability in the Middle East requires the removal of the weapons of mass destruction that are possessed by the Zionist entity and requires that its nuclear facilities be subjected to the IAEA safeguards regime in application of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 487 (1981). The continuation of the Zionist entity's nuclear programme outside the international system of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the refusal by this entity to accede to the NPT and subject its nuclear facilities to the IAEA safeguards regime constitute a threat to the national security of the Arab nations and jeopardizes the security and stability of the area. It will limit the credibility and universality of the NPT, because this entity is the only one in the region that has not acceded to the Treaty.

Thus, the Security Council, as the organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, should guarantee the universality of all the provisions related to non-proliferation without any double standards and should take the measures required to achieve this goal, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, as well as the provision of effective and comprehensive guarantees to the non-nuclear States that there will be no use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against them. Iraq proceeds from the fact that it has been a victim of the use of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons and depleted uranium.

At a time when the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament reflects the international community's need for a more stable, peaceful and secure world, a sort of paralysis has afflicted the Conference since 1997. That paralysis is the result of a lack of political will on the part of some parties, and it has prevented the Conference from carrying out substantive work, despite the fact that Mr. Amorim submitted a proposal on 21 August 2001 aimed at breaking that deadlock. The delegation of Iraq supports the essential elements of the Amorim proposal on establishing ad hoc committees. We hope that negotiations in the Conference will take into account the international need to establish agreements and instruments on nuclear disarmament. My delegation also hopes that the Conference will be able to begin its substantive work at the next session. We, like several other delegations represented in the Conference on Disarmament, also welcome and support expanding the membership of the Conference.

At a time when the international community is making great efforts to regulate and coordinate activities aimed at using outer space for peaceful purposes and the benefit of all humankind, the American Administration has been trying since 1998 to develop a national missile defence system outside the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, which was signed between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1972. That Treaty defined the defensive systems of the two countries and set out a course for reductions in tactical and strategic nuclear weapons so as to guarantee international peace and security.

The American effort to militarize space contradicts its commitments under international and bilateral agreements, including the ABM Treaty and the principles regulating the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The American Administration's continuation of work towards that goal will start a new global arms race that will undermine the strategic balance, peace and stability. We wish to take this opportunity to say that we support the Russian Federation's draft resolution on keeping the ABM Treaty in force, as we believe that its implementation by the signatories would serve to curb the arms race and contribute to international peace and security.

While referring to the need to rid humanity of weapons of mass destruction, we would also like to remind the Committee that the number of Iraqi civilians killed by the unjust sanctions that have been imposed on Iraq for over 11 years exceeds the world's total number of victims of weapons of mass destruction. It is not surprising that the country that first used nuclear weapons, against Nagasaki and

Hiroshima, is also the same State using sanctions as a weapon of genocide against Iraq. In this connection, I wish to refer to the report issued by the subcommittee on human rights at its most recent session, held in July and August. The report stated that the sanctions against Iraq were illegal under international humanitarian and human rights law. Reports by other humanitarian and legal organizations have also confirmed that the sanctions against Iraq constitute by all measures a crime of genocide.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons and the use of comprehensive economic sanctions as a political means of carrying out genocide against a people is a threat to humanity. Their use will lead to terrible consequences for humankind and should be halted immediately. We should place the interests of humankind as a whole above the narrow interests of one party or another. We should also continue to work to fully eradicate all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular. We should prevent international mechanisms from being used as cover for the implementation of genocidal policies against peoples.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic): Allow me first, on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that, with your rich experience and diplomatic skills, you will guide the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion. At the same time, may I also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Ambassador U Mya Than of Myanmar for the excellent work he carried out as Chairman of the Committee during the previous session.

I fully associate myself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Myanmar, who spoke on behalf of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). On behalf of my own country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I would like to emphasize some points that are of importance to us.

The situation in the world has not been developing smoothly. Acts of aggression, violence, religious conflict, civil strife and interference in the internal affairs of States continue to pose threats to world peace and security. However, with the tragic events of 11 September and their aftermath, the situation has become even more difficult. The threat of the use of biological, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction is now a reality. The international community should work together and do everything possible to seek collective security that can bring durable peace and security to all. Those efforts should avoid seeking security for oneself alone while leaving others under threats and fear.

In a message to the forty-fifth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said,

> "Making progress in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is more important than ever in the aftermath of last week's appalling terrorist attack on the United States." (*SG/SM/7958*)

That message from the Secretary-General reminds us all of the grave danger that nuclear weapons pose to humankind.

In that regard, we would like to stress the importance of the successful conclusion of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The States parties to the Treaty agreed that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. We hope that the commitments already made by State parties, in particular those made by the nuclear-weapon States, will be fulfilled. Every effort should be made to find additional ways to make progress towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic supports and welcomes every effort of the international community, including bilateral and unilateral efforts, to reduce or eliminate nuclear weapons. In this context, we hope that the upcoming summit between the Russian Federation and the United States of America will lead to the entry into force of the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II). We look forward to its implementation.

Last year, our country, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, deposited with the United Nations its instrument of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is manifest testimony of the Lao people's aspiration to see our world free from nuclear weapons. Although imperfect, the CTBT is, in our opinion, an important instrument that can help international efforts towards

achieving the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. In this vein, we would like to stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT. To that end, we urge all States, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, to ratify it as soon as possible. Nuclear disarmament is a long process. All efforts towards achieving this objective should be welcomed. This is how we believe the CTBT ought to be perceived.

Like many others, the Lao People's Dèmocratic Republic strongly believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned has contributed to global and regional peace and security and the efforts towards gradual elimination of all nuclear weapons. In that regard, we support fully the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones such as those established under the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba.

Many countries are of the view that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty is a cornerstone of strategic stability. For those countries, it has served to maintain world security and strategic balance for over two decades, and is a basis for further reductions in strategic offensive weapons. We share this view and express the hope that the States parties to the Treaty will comply fully with its provisions.

It is regrettable that the negotiations last May on a verification protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention reached no agreement. In view of the importance of the Convention, it is crucial that the Fifth Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, which is to be held in November, achieve positive results. In dealing with this issue, we would like to reiterate our opinion that the use of biological knowledge for economic development and peaceful purposes should be taken into consideration.

For four years now, the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating body it the field of disarmament, has failed to agree on a programme of work. As a consequence, this has slowed the work on disarmament. In that regard, we call upon all States concerned to redouble their efforts and engage in negotiations that take into account both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held last July, marked a good beginning in the worldwide efforts to identify ways and means to tackle the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Programme of Action adopted by the Conference contains some practical measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in such weapons. However, like many others, we regret that the Programme of Action still lacks some important elements. In that regard, we hope that the follow-up measures will improve upon the achievements of the Conference and that the Programme of Action will be implemented effectively.

In the new global environment of globalization and communications, confidence-building measures are vitally important for the promotion of peace and security in the various regions of the world, and for the enhancement of mutual understanding among nations. In that context, we very much appreciate all the activities organized by the United Nations, regional centres, Governments, organizations and non-governmental organizations on promoting and enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among countries and peoples in various regions. We believe that only cooperation and confidence-building measures will help bring real peace and security to all nations.

In conclusion, as we all know full well, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are the only weapons that threaten the survival of humankind. These weapons can destroy every single living creature on our planet in a matter of minutes. It is therefore essential for the world community to make unremitting efforts to ensure that the world is free of these weapons.

Together with all other delegations, the Lao People's Democratic Republic will continue to do its utmost in the efforts to attain this noble goal.

Mr. Fils-Aimé (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, permit me first to extend my warmest congratulations, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. You have already conducted our work for more than a week, and we are very happy that we chose you to lead our deliberations. Our congratulations also go to all members of the Bureau, who are assisting you in this

important and delicate task, as well as to your predecessor, Ambassador Mya Than of Myanmar.

For a moment, on 11 September 2001, the world was under the impression that it was watching *Towering Inferno II*, with Steve McQueen and Paul Newman, on their television screens. Nobody could believe their eyes, because there is no instrument powerful and sophisticated enough to convey the heated passions of certain macabre persons who call themselves "men of faith". The world had never before witnessed what the hatred harboured in the hearts of fanatics could spawn. The world had never imagined that such deadly hatred could lead these terrorists down to the pits of hell to conceive such awfully heinous, beastly, monstrous and demonic acts. Our delegation resolutely condemns these acts of terror and takes this opportunity to reiterate our deepest sympathy to the American Government and people, particularly to the thousands of bereaved families.

This time the perpetrators used civilian aircraft as missiles and high-occupancy buildings as targets. What would happen if they could lay their hands on the kind of weapons that a number of delegations, for one or reason or another, insist on seeing as instruments of deterrence? At this time, we are fully convinced that these weapons — nuclear, chemical and biological — are not really instruments of deterrence, but rather instruments of pressure and blackmail used to confer strategic advantages. In the light of the 11 September experience, it is absolutely imperative that we regain our sense of urgency. The crisis facing multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament has lasted too long. What good is it to hold more and more international conferences if the commitments made there are not respected?

In his resounding statement of 8 October 2001 before this Committee, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, to whom my delegation pays a well-deserved tribute for his commitment to the cause of disarmament, painted a fairly graphic picture of the challenges we are facing at this crucial juncture when all peoples of the world stand united in repudiating terrorism. As Mr. Dhanapala stressed, we need to take advantage of this remarkable solidarity in order to work together. This is the time to cooperate, he underlined, the time for the primacy of law, the time to recognize common threats and to realize to what extent our common security needs to be based on the pillars of justice, basic human rights and equitable development for all societies. As far as this Committee is concerned, Mr. Dhanapala said, it is time, in particular, to strengthen roads and bridges leading to the implementation of multilateral commitments to disarmament.

My delegation fully subscribes to Jamaica's statement of 12 October made on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), of which my country is a member. We will therefore not cover point by point the observations and proposals relative to the region. Nevertheless, allow my delegation to express its regret over the lack of progress in the field of disarmament, where the conclusion of legally binding, irrevocable and verifiable agreements remains seriously impeded.

First of all, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has still not come into force. Forty-four countries have not yet ratified it; 13 of these 44 ratifications are indispensable for its entry into force. Apart from that, despite the historic commitment made by the nuclear Powers at the sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to carry out the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, only scant initiatives have been taken to give effect to the 13 steps adopted in May 2000, particularly with regard to the part of the Final Document relating to article VI. Furthermore, it is very disappointing to state that, despite the wishes of the international community, four States, of which three are nuclear Powers, have not yet acceded to the NPT.

Being deeply committed to the disarmament cause, Haiti has never understood the logic of the nuclear deterrence doctrine. Given the nefarious results of the disasters on 6 and 9 August 1945 that pulverized Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we have never understood the basis of the promise made by certain States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. We have never understood why these instruments capable of destroying our planet several times over are still part of our arsenals while we claim to adhere to universal values. These weapons should not have been invented in the first place, and now that the yoke of the cold war has been lifted, we need to work towards the complete elimination of these weapons, whether they are in safe places or within reach of feverish hands.

For the third year running, the Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament and arms control, is still at an impasse and has not been able to agree on a plan of work. This state of affairs does nothing to advance negotiations, and the treaty banning the production of fissile materials for military uses suffers greatly as a result.

We still live in a world where might makes right. Sooner or later, a unilateral approach on the part of one State will lead to resentment on the part of others. At the dawn of a new millennium, it would be better to forge an international coalition — a multilateral partnership — and to renounce power politics and the abuse of authority. We must accord more importance to dialogue, and create a just system that does not allow for double standards.

In this context, it would be wise of us to involve ourselves in issues relating to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. My delegation still believes that that Treaty must remain a guarantee of strategic stability, and we would like to express our support, as we have done in the past, for the draft resolution on safeguarding and strengthening the ABM Treaty. We hope that START II will soon enter into force and that its provisions will be implemented in their entirety, and that START III will be concluded as soon as possible.

It is regrettable that after seven years of negotiation, the Ad Hoc Group of the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention has failed to elaborate a verification protocol. We hope that, at the Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, which will take place in Geneva at the end of the year, the mandate of the Group will be renewed so that it can proceed to the elaboration of an international legal instrument.

My delegation cannot fail to stress the importance of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones. They are an efficient means of strengthening the non-proliferation regime for such weapons. My country welcomes the fact that the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco created a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region, and we cannot but encourage the creation of such zones elsewhere. The more volatile a region is, the more the elimination of the threat posed by those weapons can contribute to fostering a climate of mutual peace and trust.

My delegation welcomes the progress achieved since the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Although we are heartened by the fact that 165 States have signed the Convention since its adoption in 1993, we still need to step up our efforts to ensure the universality of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.

My delegation welcomed the holding in New York, from 30 July to 3 August 2001, of the first session of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles in All Their Aspects. We also welcome the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which took place in New York from 9 to 20 July this year. Although the Conference did not seek to allocate additional resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action, and although it did not provide for the total elimination of the transfer of such weapons to non-State actors — a fact regretted by a number of delegations — it nonetheless represents a very important point of departure for international cooperation to control that scourge, which, during the course of the past decade, has resulted in the death of 2 million people and left 5 million disabled, 12 million homeless and more than 1 million orphans. We hope that the Programme of Action will bear fruit as soon as possible and that every resource will be mobilized so that the excessive accumulation and spread of small arms, which have great destructive power, no longer undermine the foundations of our young economies and democracies.

The total value of arms transfers between 1993 and 2000 was about $303 billion; 70 per cent of those arms were imported by developing countries. In this context, and given the decline in official development assistance, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, speaking on the subject of the link between disarmament and development on 11 June at the opening of a workshop in Lima, noted that developing countries needed to rely more on their own resources and, to that end, to re-examine the percentage of their gross domestic product and national budgets used for military spending.

In our country, Haiti, where international assistance is scarce, President Jean Bertrand Aristide, upon his return from exile, got rid of the national army — a body of only 7,000 men that nonetheless accounted for 40 per cent of the national budget. Despite the fact that it absorbed such a large share of

the budget, it did almost nothing to protect property or life, and it did not project a positive image of our country. To make matters worse, some of those military personnel, especially those in the highest ranks, were no more than spies bought for a handful of dollars, or torturers, notorious criminals and perennial plotters of bloody coups who were too impatient or bloodthirsty to respect the mandate of a head of State.

In the wake of the tragedy of 11 September, which has brought together people of goodwill from all cultures, my delegation would like to express the hope that there will be a revival of interest on the part of Member States in matters of disarmament. We should use this opportunity to foster a new spirit of cooperation, and redouble our efforts so as to ensure international peace and security. The Organization has come a long way: today we are sharing the Nobel Peace Prize with the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, to whom my delegation would like to pay a warm tribute. May the United Nations continue to be the source of peace, and may politicians and diplomats from Member States understand that true peace cannot be reduced simply to military concepts, but must be constructed in a climate of mutual trust.

The Chairman (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Baeidi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today, in this room, the Israeli representative made false and totally hostile accusations against my country. Such a statement, of course, was only to be expected, since Israel, which suffers from a lack of legitimacy, is now feeling isolated and is rightly being placed under pressure. It is therefore trying to shift the blame for its difficulties to sources other than its own extremist and aggressive policies.

Since its inception, Israel has pursued a policy of terror and intimidation in the region and, on the basis of such a policy, has developed weapons of mass destruction on a large scale. Accordingly, it has developed short-, medium- and long-range missiles to enable it to carry weapons of mass destruction across the whole of the region of the Middle East and beyond.

Today, Israel is continuing to develop nuclear weapons, against the will of the international community as reflected in consensus General Assembly resolutions and as expressed during the recent 2000 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which asked Israel to renounce nuclear weapons and place its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

In the same spirit, Israel has developed chemical and biological weapons and has, accordingly, declined to adhere to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. In complete contrast, my country has adopted a fundamental defence policy based on renouncing weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. My country is among the very few examples of countries in the Middle East that was an original party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention since the inception of these international treaties, although it could justifiably have not done so. My country believes that the essential benchmark for increasing and promoting security in the region is the adherence of all States to all treaties on weapons of mass destruction and thus banning the development and the production of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Furthermore, in the recent regional context, we believe that every effort needs to be made to stop Israel from continuing its criminal policy in the region consisting of the massacre of innocent people in the occupied territories and the targeting of innocent people who fight only for their freedom and for an end to the occupation of their territory by Israel. On this issue, I am sure that an appropriate agenda item is and will be under consideration by other General Assembly Committees.

Programme of work

The Chairman: In accordance with the First Committee programme of work and timetable that we adopted, we will, as members know, be embarking on the second phase of our work on Monday, 22 October. We have one more day to devote to this agenda item — tomorrow, when it is expected that there will be 13 speakers. On Monday, we will start the second phase, which is a thematic discussion on item subjects, as well as the introduction and the consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items.

In order to efficiently utilize the conference facilities available to this Committee, I have prepared an indicative timetable for that second phase of the work that is contained in document A/C.1/56/CRP.2, and I guess members have it before them.

In proposing this indicative timetable, the Chair followed the practice already established by the First Committee during previous sessions of the General Assembly. So I intend to carry out the discussions in the following manner, and members will be able to follow this in document A/C.1/56/CRP.2. The meeting on Monday, 22 October, and Tuesday, 23 October, will be dedicated to questions related to nuclear weapons. Then on Wednesday, 24 October, it will be dedicated to other weapons of mass destruction and outer space — the disarmament aspects of outer space. On Thursday, 25 October, we will be dealing with questions concerning conventional weapons, and on Friday, 26 October, we will discuss regional disarmament and security and confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments. On Monday, 29 October, and Tuesday, 30 October, we will be discussing issues related to disarmament machinery, other disarmament measures, international security and related matters of disarmament and international security.

If we complete the discussion of issues planned for a given meeting, we will then move on during that very meeting to the discussion of the next item on our timetable. Therefore, I kindly ask delegations to be prepared to do so. It is also understood that generally speaking, a degree of flexibility will be maintained to allow delegations to address issues of concern to them without, hopefully, substantially altering the structure before members. I will ask for members' understanding and cooperation in this matter. This is, I guess, important to allow the Committee to move ahead with the required efficiency and speed. The indicative timetable outlined is in accordance with the adopted decisions on the rationalization of the work of the Committee. As I mentioned earlier, in this second phase the Committee's work will combine the discussion of specific subjects, as well as the introduction and the consideration of all draft resolutions.

I would like to ask delegations to kindly introduce draft resolutions during this phase, the second phase of the Committee, as early as possible, in order, quite obviously, to enable other delegations to make comments on them. Representatives see this indicative timetable before them, and if I hear no objection, I will take it that this timetable for our thematic discussion is acceptable to delegations, and we will proceed accordingly.

In order to organize the forthcoming meetings, I would also suggest that delegations should inscribe their names on the list of speakers for the specific meetings of phase two, if possible, with the clear understanding that members all obviously have the all the latitude to raise their hands and speak from the floor.

Again, I would like to remind Member States that the deadline for the submission of the draft resolutions on all disarmament and international security agenda items is Thursday, 18 October, at 6 p.m., as was already announced earlier. All this should not come as a shock.

The next meeting of the Committee, and the last meeting of this phase one, will be held on Wednesday, 17 October, at 10 a.m., in this room.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/56/PV.11

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

First Committee
11th meeting
Wednesday, 17 October 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Erdös ..... (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 64 to 84 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Osei (Ghana): The lot of being the first speaker in a meeting is to address a near-empty room, but someone must take the plunge.

Since my delegation is taking the floor for the first time during this session, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your election. I have no doubt about your ability successfully to guide our deliberations, given your experience in the field of disarmament.

Although my Government has formally conveyed its warm congratulations to the United Nations and to the Secretary-General on their having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, allow me also, since I have the opportunity, to reiterate the warm sentiments that you, Mr. Chairman, have already conveyed to the Secretary-General on behalf of our Committee.

My delegation also appreciates the presentation made by the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, a presentation which gave all of us a clear idea of the state of play in the field of disarmament — a crisis of multilateral disarmament diplomacy, as he put it.

Ghana also fully subscribes to the statement read by the delegation of South Africa on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, which highlighted the Movement's position on all relevant disarmament issues of concern to the Movement. I will therefore merely take the opportunity to underscore a number of points.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September will forever remain etched in our memory. They were brutal, horrifying and traumatizing, and indeed constituted a major threat to international peace and security. The Government of Ghana has already condemned the attack and expressed its condolences to the Government and the people of the United States. It has also pledged its cooperation and support in the fight against a phenomenon that is clearly global in its impact.

During the General Assembly debate of 3 October on "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", Ghana's Permanent Representative stressed that the fight against terrorism was beyond the scope and capacity of any single nation and that it required genuine cooperation on the part of all, at the national, regional and global levels. This recognition has already been affirmed by our heads of State and Government at the United Nations Millennium Summit last year. They decided

> "To take concerted action against international terrorism, and to accede as soon as possible to all the relevant international conventions." (*General Assembly resolution 55/2, para. 9*)

In that same Declaration, our political leaders resolved to strive to eliminate weapons of mass

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to reduce the global risks posed by small arms and landmines.

We therefore must accept that 11 September changed our lives and that therefore our attitudes towards negotiations on disarmament must change accordingly, in conformity with the commitment of our leaders. Naturally, the questions many have posed are, "Why did it happen? What can be done? What can we do?"

Here again let me make a point that was underscored by Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala during his presentation a few weeks ago:

> "Only history will decide how much of a defining moment 11 September will be. But history will certainly not absolve us for failing to learn the lessons of that unspeakable tragedy". (*A/C.1/56/PV.3*)

Against this background, my delegation believes that the role of the First Committee is pertinent to global efforts to curb terrorism through the monitoring and control of weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, we must all engage in the disarmament process with renewed vigour, guided by the collective will and commitment of our leaders, as they resolved last year, and also mindful of the danger of tarrying, only because of our unwillingness to compromise on preferences for weapons-based security rather than a collective security assured through the process of disarmament and non-proliferation of these weapons.

The terrorist attacks have highlighted our capacity to work with the utmost dispatch and ingenuity and mobilize at all levels to defend and neutralize any of these threats. If terrorist attacks can galvanize cooperation and coalition to counter further threats, similar leadership and initiative must be mustered in all aspects of the United Nations disarmament machinery. Such an approach should be adopted to overcome the inertia or stalemate in the disarmament institutions particularly in the negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

We continue to recognize the Conference on Disarmament as the only forum for negotiations on disarmament, from which the non-nuclear-weapon States, like Ghana, expect a measure of leadership and responsibility. My delegation is therefore disappointed by the report of the President of the Conference on Disarmament that the Conference did not agree on a programme of work and did not establish any mechanisms on any of its specific agenda items in 2001.

We feel that the nuclear-weapon States must move away from strategic doctrinal differences and get on with the business of negotiations aimed at ridding the world of these destructive weapons. Whether the multilateral disarmament machinery becomes productive or, in the alternative, rusty and ineffective will largely depend on the willingness of these States to show commitment, accommodation and flexibility in the Conference on Disarmament.

In reaffirming our commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), we also uphold the conclusions of the 2000 Review Conference, and again call on the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate similar commitments to the Treaty through implementation of the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, Ghana joins other States, particularly Malaysia, in reiterating the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice that States have a legal obligation not only to pursue, in good faith, negotiations on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, but also to bring such negotiations to an early conclusion. In our view, this obligation is certainly consistent with that undertaken by all States parties under article VI of the NPT.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones have made valuable contributions to non-proliferation and disarmament objectives. The Pelindaba Treaty, which Ghana subscribes to, and the Treaties of Rarotonga and Tlatelolco have demonstrated their relevance to the promotion of regional peace and security and to regional confidence-building. We therefore continue to support the establishment of similar arrangements in other regions, particularly Asia and the Middle East, albeit on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region, as prescribed under the United Nations Disarmament Commission guidelines.

For non-nuclear-weapon States like Ghana, the Disarmament Commission offers us a platform to participate in and influence the disarmament machinery through its recommendations on various problems in this field. We therefore take the opportunity to

commend its current programme on seeking ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament, and identifying practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. We believe any specific recommendations it makes on these items at its meeting next year would help move the multilateral process forward.

However, in addition to issues of nuclear disarmament, we must also focus on the stark reality of the impact of the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and its destabilizing effect on life in developing countries. Ghana therefore welcomes the adoption of the consensus document on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. While the Conference did not meet all our expectations or agree on the need to prevent sales of arms to non-State actors or their stockpiling by civilians, Ghana considers the Programme of Action the beginning of a process, whose implementation at all levels would ultimately help address the outstanding matters. While efforts are under way at the national level to implement the Programme, we look forward to networking at the regional and international levels, especially with regard to technical cooperation to facilitate the implementation process.

The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which is based in Lomé, Togo, continues to provide substantive support to Governments, including Ghana, in various disarmament programmes, notably in the areas of peace, disarmament and security. Despite its invaluable support, it is plagued by financial and other operational difficulties due to the paucity of voluntary contributions. We will therefore continue to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the Centre, appealing to all States, as well as international and non-governmental organizations, to make contributions to promote the activities of the Centre.

We will also support the draft resolution on the prohibition of the dumping of radioactive waste, to be introduced by the delegation of Nigeria, as a reflection of concern about potential hazards that the dumping of such material would pose in our subregion.

In conclusion, Ghana reiterates that at the heart of the United Nations agenda for peace lies disarmament. Recognition must therefore be given to the positive contribution that the Department for Disarmament Affairs is playing in charting the path that enables the international community to move in that direction. It is our fervent hope that the Department, which is currently seeking a modest increase in its 2001-2003 biennium budget, will be provided with adequate resources to enable it to shoulder its burdens.

Mr. Muqaibil (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me, at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, to express to you, Sir, our congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that you are capable of conducting the work of this Committee with much wisdom and skill in view of your experience in the field of diplomacy. My delegation takes this opportunity to assure you of our full cooperation in order to achieve the desired success. We express our appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs for his comprehensive statement on the issues of disarmament and international security and for the tireless efforts that he has made, along with his staff, in the service of dealing with the issues facing our world today, in the field of disarmament and strengthening international peace and stability.

My Government has been keen on supporting all the efforts made to maintain international peace and security. In that regard, my country has signed international treaties limiting weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It also recently signed a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as part of its commitments under the CTBT. My country believes that these agreements on the prohibition and destruction of weapons of mass destruction are essential elements to creating a more stable and safe world, so long as all Member States — and nuclear-weapon States in particular — commit themselves to their strict implementation.

My Government has condemned the terrorist attacks perpetrated against the United States and has called on the international community to make concerted efforts to eliminate completely all manifestations of terrorism. It has also supported the idea of convening an international conference on terrorism under the aegis of the United Nations in order to discuss this phenomenon and its roots and to develop a common definition for it.

Despite the international community's efforts to make the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, Israel remains the only State in the region not to have signed the NPT. Its failure to do so is an obstacle to achieving that dream. We call on Israel to accede to the Treaty and to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards and controls. We also support Egypt's proposal for turning the Middle East region into a zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

With regard to the Indian Ocean region, an important cultural and vital waterway of which we are part, we look forward to making it an area of peace and security and mutual free trade through peaceful cooperation between countries, as exemplified by the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. We also welcome all efforts to establish zones free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in all continents of the world, so as to eliminate tension and hotspots and establish peace throughout the world.

We have already welcomed the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York last July. The discussions at the Conference served to shed more light on the dangers of those weapons, their destructive effects on the lives of civilians, and the need to make international efforts to ban the illegal trade in them, while maintaining the legitimate right of States to self-defence as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter.

In conclusion, I wish to mention the fact that the international community has a good opportunity to achieve success in the field of disarmament. It is therefore important to work together to achieve international peace and security in the world, which is in the interest of all the world's peoples.

Mr. Kim Chang Guk (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. I am confident that under your able guidance our deliberations during this, the first year of the new century, will produce the desired results.

At the Millennium Summit and during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, last year, Member States expressed deep concern over emerging challenges to international security and unanimously committed themselves to building fair and durable peace in the world in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Nevertheless, today's security environment shows that the concern expressed has not been addressed at all and that humankind is preoccupied more with apprehensions than with optimism.

The commitment to nuclear disarmament by the major nuclear-weapon States has not yet been translated into action, and the demands of developing countries for nuclear disarmament and assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons have been disregarded. Global military expenditures are rising in a frightening manner every year, and the arms race is being further accelerated. The Conference on Disarmament continues to be at a deadlock, without any progress.

One of the serious challenges to global security today is the attempt to establish a national missile defence (NMD) system. A national missile defence system — a new version of "Star Wars" — is explicitly aimed at dominating the world by gaining absolute military and strategic superiority. It will inevitably cause an arms race, undermine the foundation of all international legal instruments in the field of arms control and nuclear non-proliferation and destroy the world's strategic stability.

What should be underlined is that the United States is using the so-called missile threat of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a pretext for its NMD system. There is no need to explain which countries are the real targets of NMD. Pointing a finger at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in order to work out a pretext to deploy NMD constitutes an open, direct challenge to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As long as the United States continues to provoke us with a view to pursuing the establishment of NMD, we cannot but take strong counter-measures in response to it. No country would tolerate an infringement upon its sovereignty, or arbitrary actions, contrary to the principles of the United Nations.

Another dark shadow looming over global security — and particularly over the security environment in Northeast Asia — is Japan's attempt to become a military Power and to revive militarism. On 29 August, Japan carried out a test-fire of a large-scale carrier rocket known as H-2A, which is easily

convertible into an intercontinental ballistic missile. Japan did not hide the fact that the rocket would be "exclusively used for a military purpose". Japanese authorities are now revising Japan's Law on the Self-Defence Forces, with the aim of paving the way for unrestricted overseas deployment of the Self-Defence Forces.

The fact that Japan — which has a large quantity of plutonium and sufficient high technology to manufacture tens of thousands of nuclear bombs at any time — test-fires a large-scale carrier rocket and revises its Law on Self-Defence Forces is clear proof that Japan is rushing headlong towards reviving militarism and achieving military power. What provokes serious concern is that Japan continues, in collaboration with the United States, to adhere to a policy hostile to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, while clamouring about a missile threat from us. The Japanese authorities even claimed that their recent test-fire of the rocket was to "cope with north Korea's missile".

The missile programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is peaceful in nature and therefore does not represent any threat to those countries which respect its sovereignty. The United States and Japan should not misjudge the stance of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea whereby it declared a moratorium on its satellite launches. Japan should bear in mind that it will pay a hundredfold for any reckless moves aimed at realizing its old dream.

As a result of its own historical experience, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea values peace more highly than any other people, and it is making every possible effort to ensure that there is peace on the Korean peninsula.

It is to the credit of the army-first policy advanced by respected General Kim Jong Il that, in the face of attempts by hostile forces to stifle the country by force, we were able firmly to defend the destiny of the country and the nation, push ahead with socialist economic construction and contribute to maintaining peace and security in the region.

In view of the prevailing circumstances, our army-first policy is very realistic and will enable us to defend the country and ensure peace on the Korean peninsula as well as to push forward economic construction through our own efforts. The vitality of the army-first policy is the result of the fact that our people are firmly safeguarding our sovereignty under arduous conditions, preventing war on the Korean peninsula and opening the way for peaceful reunification.

In order to bring about disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, and achieve durable and lasting peace and security in the world, it is necessary to put an end to power politics and actions of intervention based on the cold-war mentality. Today, all the destabilizing factors in the field of international security are the result of a cold-war mentality, the pursuit of arbitrary power politics and intervention in the internal affairs of others.

The unstable situation that is still prevailing on the Korean peninsula is the product of the cold war policies pursued by hostile forces. Peace cannot be achieved by the efforts of only one side; nor is it for the benefit of only one side.

The major nuclear-weapon States should put their commitment to nuclear-weapons reduction into practice and contribute to attaining durable peace and security in the world. It is very important that the central role of the United Nations be enhanced in the field of disarmament and international security.

In its work, the United Nations should address all issues pertaining to global disarmament and pay full attention to accelerating the process of nuclear disarmament, an overriding disarmament issue. In this connection, we fervently hope for early agreement on convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

My delegation wishes to conclude by making clear once again its position on the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. The so-called nuclear issue originated from the sinister aim of stifling our country in the context of the international political situation that prevailed in the early 1990s, and is, in essence, the product of the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The issue of implementing the safeguards agreement will automatically be resolved when the hostility in relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America has been eased and the Agreed Framework between the two countries has been implemented.

In this regard, my delegation would like to refer to the statement made by the representative of Belgium, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), during a meeting of the Committee on 8 October. It is the expectation of my delegation that my earlier explanation of the so-called nuclear issue in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will help the EU, which has been repeating stereotyped and inappropriate arguments, to gain a correct understanding of the issue.

Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova): I should like at the outset to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau, on your well-deserved election. I am confident that, with your diplomatic skill, you will guide our current deliberations to a successful conclusion.

I should also like to express the appreciation of our delegation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, for his comprehensive opening statement.

Despite the efforts made and the positive results achieved within various international forums in recent years, disarmament and non-proliferation continue to be priority goals that must approached in a more vigorous way. As the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, stated in his message to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

> "Making progress in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament is more important than ever in the aftermath of [the] appalling terrorist attack on the United States."

Undoubtedly, those tragic events have highlighted the urgency of addressing the new and complex security challenges that confront the international community at the beginning of this century. My delegation shares the view expressed by many previous speakers that the present international situation requires a broad examination of disarmament issues and their relationship to peace and international security, as well a high level of international cooperation in the disarmament field. From this perspective, we firmly believe that the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and other multilateral forums must intensify their efforts aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, strengthening multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation instruments and eliminating weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

In this connection, my delegation reiterates its call for overcoming the stagnation in negotiations on the relevant treaties supporting nuclear non-proliferation, and for developing more constructive attitudes within the Conference on Disarmament. In our opinion, that would create a favourable basis for a more active disarmament process, which should lead to the adoption of implementable and verifiable nuclear disarmament measures in the future.

In our view, further progress towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the START II Treaty, the progressive and full implementation of the decisions of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the preservation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the successful conclusion of negotiations on the protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and the strengthening of efforts to cope with missile proliferation, as well as universal adherence to all agreements relating to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction — all these are also essential elements to this end.

In the field of conventional arms, my country fully supports the efforts of the international community to strengthen the multilateral legal instruments aimed at reducing the suffering of combatants and civilians in armed conflict. On the basis on this conviction, last year the Republic of Moldova ratified the Ottawa Convention on anti-personal landmines, as well as the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and gave its consent to be bound by three of its Protocols — Protocols I, III and IV. Furthermore, this year our Parliament ratified Protocol II, as amended on 3 May 1996. The forthcoming CCW Review Conference will no doubt provide a good opportunity for stocktaking with regard to the different Protocols.

Likewise, we support the measures that contribute to greater transparency and confidence-building between States. In this regard, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures are useful tools. With a view to achieving universal participation, this year my country provided the requested data and information on military

expenditures and on conventional arms imports and exports, and it will continue to do so in the future.

From the same perspective, my country has fully supported the regional initiatives to improve controls over the excess stockpiling or illicit sale of a diverse array of conventional arms. We welcomed the successful adaptation in 1999 of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, which represents an important contribution to European security. As a result, tens of thousand of pieces of treaty-limited equipment have been destroyed in our region under the CFE Treaty and its associated documents.

In this connection, I would like to emphasize that my Government is encouraged by the recent efforts of the Russian Federation to reduce its CFE treaty-limited equipment located in the Transdniestrian region of our country. Given the considerable progress that has already been made, we certainly hope that the process of the destruction or the removal of foreign combat weaponry will be completed before the ministerial meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to be held in Bucharest this December. In this context, I would like also to express our gratitude to those members of the OSCE that are contributing financially to the Voluntary Fund established in accordance with the Istanbul decisions to assist the process of weapon destruction or withdrawal.

The adoption by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects of a Programme of Action aimed at combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons was a welcome development. We believe that the full implementation of all the measures it contains will certainly facilitate the ongoing efforts to achieve the peaceful settlement of many conflicts around the world, including in the Transdniestrian region of my country, controlled by a separatist regime, a region that is, unfortunately, known for its illegal production of and illicit trafficking in various types of armaments, including small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Moldova will continue to constructively cooperate in the search for solutions that may arise in the area of disarmament, and, with that in mind, my delegation is ready to contribute as best it can to the success of present session of the First Committee.

Mr. Ngoh Ngoh (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to begin, Sir, by expressing the delegation of Cameroon's heartfelt congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your election honours your country, Hungary, with which Cameroon has excellent relations. It also bears witness to the great appreciation of your wealth of experience and great diplomatic skill. My delegation has no doubt that under your leadership our work will be crowned with success. I assure you of our fullest support and cooperation in carrying out your work.

We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau. We express our appreciation for the remarkable work accomplished by your predecessor, Ambassador Mya Than, during the fifty-fifth session. Finally, we wish to thank Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala for his efforts and particularly for his pertinent remarks at the opening of our work.

The loathsome terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001 deeply shocked the entire world. The Government and the people of Cameroon, through President Paul Biya, firmly condemned these indescribable acts. My delegation reiterates this condemnation. It also expresses to the American Government and people, as well as to the families of the victims, its most heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy.

My country finds in these sad events the opportunity to renew with increased determination its commitment to join the rest of the international community in a merciless fight against terrorism.

Recent developments in the area of disarmament and international security do not particularly inspire optimism. Once again, we must deplore the increase in disarmament expenditures in the world, estimated at over $800 billion in 2000.

In the nuclear field, last year's promising trends have not been confirmed. The hope born of the encouraging results of the Sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held in May 2000, and the commitments made by the world's heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit, particularly on nuclear disarmament, still have not been followed up with concrete action.

The picture appears more sombre still. The States parties to the NPT had committed themselves at the Review Conference to proceed to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. They also agreed to pursue a series of measures to achieve nuclear disarmament and the maintenance of strategic stability, particularly through greater transparency, an additional reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons and reduced priority for nuclear weapons in defence policies. What has actually happened? These commitments have basically remained a dead letter. Moreover, disarmament negotiations have been marking time, to such an extent that the United Nations Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters has been able to speak about the crisis of multilateral diplomacy in the area of disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament, the only multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has this year again failed to reach agreement on a programme of work, particularly on launching negotiations on a treaty banning weapons-grade fissile material. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has still not entered into force. Of the 44 States whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force, only 31 have deposited their instruments for ratification. Finally, the uncertainty over the state of strategic relations between the main nuclear-weapons Powers and the stability of agreements in this area have become matters of great concern to the international community.

The situation regarding other weapons of mass destruction is no better. In July 2001 the negotiations held in Geneva on a verification protocol designed to strengthen the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) came to nothing. Despite some progress, strong differences persist regarding field visits, transfers and exports control.

The work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons continues to encounter many difficulties, such as the disappointing results of programmes for the destruction of chemical-weapon stocks, the reluctance of some States to honour the declaration and transparency obligation and lack of cooperation. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction has entered into force, but it is far from being universal.

The existence of great quantities of weapons of mass destruction weigh on humankind with their horrifying risk of annihilation. The terrorist threats against which the international community is currently mobilizing shed a new light on the reality of such a risk; it has moved from the realm of speculation into our daily lives. Only the total elimination and complete ban of weapons of mass destruction will be able to really protect humankind from the horrifying risk of their being used.

My country therefore strongly calls on States to act rapidly on the commitments they made during the NPT Review Conference and the Millennium Summit. We appeal to States that have not yet done so to accede to the various international conventions prohibiting weapons of mass destruction in order to ensure their entry into force and universal adhesion. We call for the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to be convened soon; it had originally been scheduled for 25 to 27 September 2001 in New York. Meanwhile, it is fundamental that the current moratorium on nuclear testing continue to be respected. The conclusion of a legally binding agreement on the cut-off of fissile materials is one of the goals of greatest priority that the international community must set for itself in this domain. My delegation hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to reach a consensus on its programme of work during the next session. It is time States demonstrated their political will on this subject. There is no longer time for procrastination.

The notable lack of progress on the subject of weapons of mass destruction is by no means the only reason for the international community's concern in questions of disarmament. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the devastation they cause in many parts of the world are increasingly drawing the attention of the international community. The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held from 9 to 20 July 2001 in New York, marked the end of a long process of increasing awareness of the deadly and destructive effects of light weapons and was the starting point of a large mobilization of the various actors of the international community — States, international organization, regional organizations and civil society — in the fight against this scourge. Despite strenuous efforts, the Conference unfortunately did not reach a consensus on the question of

controlling the possession by individuals of light weapons produced for military purposes, nor on the sale and transfer of such weapons to non-State entities.

Cameroon is still persuaded that progress is necessary on this issue. We are all the more convinced of it because the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference stressed the links between the illicit trade in light weapons and terrorist activities. The Programme of Action anticipated concrete measures on the international, regional and global levels to prevent, curb and eliminate the illicit trade in small arms. It also established a framework for cooperation involving the various actors of the international community in this fight. My country welcomes this. It is also pleased with the commitments made by the various countries that participated in the Conference to implement the Programme of Action in good faith. That gives real reason for hope for the countries and peoples suffering daily from the devastation caused by light weapons.

Cameroon attaches special importance to the efforts for disarmament and to the establishment of confidence-building measures on the regional level. The regional organizations and the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament play in this respect an appreciable role deserving of all the international community's support. My country welcomes the efforts made in this regard by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, based in Lomé. However, the Centre still encounters serious financial difficulties that prevent it from being fully operational. Cameroon calls on the international community to contribute to the special trust fund created for the strengthening of the activities of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa.

The United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, created by the Secretary-General in 1992, deserves similar support from the international community. Since its creation, the Committee has earned a reputation for its worthy efforts towards peace and security in Central Africa, particularly by establishing confidence-building measures and promoting cooperation in security matters among the countries in the subregion. Under its aegis, the Non-Aggression Pact and the Mutual Assistance Pact among the countries of Central Africa were concluded, and the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) was created. We wish to thank the Secretary-General and, in particular, the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the considerable support they have unceasingly extended to the activities of the Standing Advisory Committee. We also appeal to the international community for more substantial contributions to the special trust fund for the Committee, so that it can effectively implement its programme of action.

The work of our Committee dedicated to international peace and security assumes special importance in the fifty-sixth session. My country is ready, as in the past, to make a constructive contribution in collaboration with the other States.

Mr. Abelian (Armenia): At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, and to the members of the Bureau, upon your election to the chairmanship of the Committee.

For the last decades, the main and ultimate objectives of the disarmament process have been viewed as the total elimination of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, and a significant reduction in conventional weapons. However, right now we are facing another difficult challenge. International terrorism has quickly risen to the top of the international security agenda.

It is our conviction that it is well within the purview of this Committee to consider measures aimed at preventing and removing threats to peace and security emanating from sub-State-level terrorist and extremist entities. In this regard, we believe that United Nations can play a significant role through its existing mechanisms, including those of arms control. We would like to commend the actions undertaken by the Secretary-General to direct the efforts of Member States and whole system of the United Nations in the fight against this plague of the twenty-first century.

However, the effectiveness of the concerted actions in this area must be strengthened by each and every State by adopting the necessary measures at the national, regional and international levels. As was rightly stated by the Secretary-General in his address during the debate on measures to eliminate international terrorism,

> "The task now is to build on that wave of human solidarity — to ensure that the momentum is not lost, to develop a broad, comprehensive and above all sustained strategy to combat terrorism and eradicate it from our world." (*A/56/PV.12*)

Armenia has always supported all multilateral agreements and practical steps aimed at prohibiting weapons of mass destruction and reducing nuclear danger. We view the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as almost a universal tool to advance nuclear disarmament. The outcome of the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in which the nuclear-weapon States agreed to an "unequivocal undertaking" to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, proved that the NPT is the main and most effective legal basis for actions to prohibit and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is one of the major achievements for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. With its growing list of signatories and ratifications, the Treaty became a main international tool against further nuclear testing. We hope that despite the postponement of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, all countries will spare no time and effort in order to free their respective regions and the whole world from the threat of nuclear violence.

The 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) constitutes an important cornerstone of the existing disarmament framework and has direct bearings on international security. Although we understand that national missile defence is a direct response to the ever-increasing threat posed by missile proliferation, we also tend to share the position of many States that every effort should be made to maintain global strategic balance and stability. We believe that the deployment of such a system will endanger the whole process of nuclear disarmament and will send a wrong signal to other disarmament regimes. We would also welcome a non-conflict adaptation of the ABM Treaty, taking due account of the interests of all parties concerned and the problems that emerge in connection with the proliferation of missiles and missile technologies, as well as weapons of mass destruction.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important element of the overall process of nuclear disarmament. We support the establishment of such zones, provided that, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the Disarmament Commission, they have been freely arrived at among all States of the regions concerned. Armenia will support any new proposal for the establishment of such zones when a consensus is reached among concerned States. We strongly believe that such a consensus must be reached prior to seeking international consideration.

During recent decades, the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons has constituted a serious threat to international peace and security. Armenia has declared the combating of small arms proliferation a priority for its national security. Over the past few years, we have been actively working with our international partners to adopt relevant national export control legislation and to strengthen border control.

The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects marked important progress in international action to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We believe that, in order to encourage and to strengthen the global approach to the problem of the proliferation of small arms, the international community should take advantage of the documents adopted at the Conference.

The recent terrorist attacks focused the attention of the international community on the complex challenge of chemical and biological terrorism. This threat is a challenge that can be met only through political will and the necessary resources. The international community must do its utmost to strengthen the existing tools in this area.

After the entry into force on 29 April 1997 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the effective operation of a complex verification mechanism and modalities was launched. The effective verification activities of the Convention must serve as a good example for other arms control regimes.

The recent tragic events give utmost priority to our efforts aimed at countering the proliferation and at achieving the earliest possible elimination of biological and chemical weapons. An effective protocol to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention remains a high priority for us. This will require a substantive, high-level political commitment on the part of all those involved in the negotiations to develop a robust compliance regime that reinforces the global norm against biological weapons.

The problem of landmines constitutes a great threat to political and social stability. The Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the total ban agreed in Oslo as a part of Ottawa process made a significant difference in this area. But, as we have stated before, Armenia's full participation in the Ottawa Convention is contingent upon a similar level of political commitment by the other States in the region.

Finally Armenia considers the Conference on Disarmament to be the forum for negotiating global disarmament instruments. The successful negotiation of the CTBT is a clear example of the Conference's ability to work out global instruments aimed at strengthening international peace and security. As a sign of our commitment to the principles of disarmament, Armenia has applied for full membership in the Conference. We hope that the current impasse on the issue of a fissile material cut-off treaty can be overcome and that the Conference will simultaneously start negotiations on a ban on the transfer of anti-personnel landmines.

Mr. Cengizer (Turkey): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee. I am confident that, under your able stewardship, the Committee will be successfully guided through its challenging agenda.

The carnage that the United States and our civilization was subjected to on 11 September was beyond any description. I would like to take this opportunity to express my nation's deepest feelings of sympathy and condolences to the people and the Government of the United States. The United States is a very close friend and ally of Turkey. Yet, as far as terrorism is concerned, I have to say that there is something more to this relationship. Through the tumultuous years of our fight against terrorism, the United States always stood by Turkey, at times alone. Now, in its hour of need, Turkey firmly stands by the United States.

The events of 11 September showed once more the necessity of considering disarmament and non-proliferation on a multilateral and general basis in order to prevent terrorists and their organizations from having any access whatsoever to more powerful means.

Turkey perceives the arms control and disarmament process as a significant dimension of its national security policy. As a corollary, we attach great importance to fulfilling the obligations emanating from international agreements and arrangements. We are committed to the goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. This goal should be pursued with realism through a balanced approach encompassing steps relating to nuclear and conventional arms alike.

In the field of conventional arms control, Turkey attaches utmost importance to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), which continues to play a vital role in the European security architecture and to make an indispensable contribution to security and stability in its area of application and even beyond. As such, it is rightly referred to as a cornerstone of European security. Since its entry into force, the impact of the Treaty on the security landscape has been remarkable and impressive. Almost two years ago, the States parties concluded successfully a long and arduous process to adapt the Treaty to new circumstances. Turkey took active part in and contributed to the adaptation process, which culminated in the signing of the Agreement on Adaptation that we had honour to host in Istanbul. We believe that the Treaty in its new form, which will come into force after ratification by 30 States parties, will further enhance and ensure the continuing viability of security and stability in Europe. Likewise, we attach importance to the timely entry into force of the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty signed in Istanbul. To this end, we expect all the States parties to work for the creation of the conditions necessary for the ratification of this Agreement. Pending the entry into force of the adaptation Agreement, full compliance with the existing CFE and its associated documents is of vital importance.

Turkey considers confidence- and security-building measures as elements complementing disarmament efforts at the bilateral and multilateral levels. In this context, the Vienna Document constitutes an important confidence- and security-building measure instrument, contributing effectively to security and stability in the area of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mindful of the serious threat posed to international peace and security by the illicit small arms trade and of the destabilizing impact of the illegal

transfer of such weapons at the regional level, we attach importance to and participate actively in efforts to control small arms and light weapons, which are not yet covered by multilateral disarmament arrangements. The illicit flow of such weapons to criminals, terrorist groups and drug traffickers is of particular concern to Turkey and the prevention of such transfers is amongst its security policy priorities. Given the fact that more than 90 per cent of the victims of small arms and light weapons are civilians, the use of such weapons remains a growing humanitarian preoccupation. We believe that the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001, provided a good opportunity to consider effective ways of combating the destabilizing accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons.

Hence Turkey's active participation in the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva and in other United Nations bodies dealing with the prevention of the proliferation and destabilizing accumulation of conventional weapons and small arms. For more effective international control, Turkey encourages transparency in transfers of conventional weapons. In that context, we advocate the expansion of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include categories of small arms and light weapons. Turkey also supports similar initiatives within the framework of the Wassenaar Arrangement on export controls for conventional arms and dual-use technologies and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Notwithstanding the fresh hopes for a safer environment brought about by the end of the cold war, the world has experienced a proliferation of regional conflicts and armed hostilities, and has witnessed a trend towards the spread and destabilizing accumulation of sophisticated weapons systems, including weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The proliferation of those weapons and their means of delivery is a tangible and growing threat facing our nations. Despite efforts by the international community to devise comprehensive and effective arms control and disarmament measures, some countries, albeit few in number, still continue to improve and/or seek to acquire nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and related technologies. Furthermore, progressive improvements in the range and accuracy of ballistic missiles render the threat of proliferation all the more worrying, since they make weapons of mass destruction readily usable. The Middle East and North Africa are home to the highest concentration of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and missile programmes of any region in the world.

In order to understand the rationale behind that high level of proliferation in the Middle East, it would be worthwhile to look at the root causes of the problem from a wider perspective. We observe that in response to the perceived weapons capabilities of the other party or of a neighbour, countries in the region intensify their armament efforts, thus perpetuating a destabilizing vicious circle. Therefore, we are of the opinion that any credible effort aimed at finding a lasting solution to the problem of proliferation in the Middle East must first and foremost address the issue of eradicating all weapons of mass destruction in the region. We believe that arms control agreements and non-proliferation regimes will continue to restrain the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. We consider it extremely important that all countries in that region should sign, ratify and fully implement all international treaties and agreements which aim at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles.

We are all aware that many of the technologies associated with weapons of mass destruction programmes also have legitimate civilian or military applications. As dual-use technologies and expertise continue to spread internationally, the prospects for nuclear, biological and chemical terrorism are also growing. The relative ease with which such weapons are produced, coupled with the willingness of some States to cooperate with terrorist, extremist or organized-crime groups, increases our concern that such weapons, especially chemical and biological weapons, could end up in unwanted hands.

We observe with concern the ongoing transfers of weapons of mass destruction and missile matériel and technology. If that trend continues, the primary customers for such matériel might themselves become suppliers for other possible proliferators over the next decade. Therefore, we also believe in the need for extreme vigilance in the transfer of sensitive matériel and technology to regions that are of particular concern, such as the Middle East. While the main responsibility for effective international cooperation in the prevention of proliferation lies mainly with supplier countries, countries located on transfer routes should

also shoulder their responsibility and cooperate with suppliers to prevent unauthorized access to such matériel and technologies.

It is Turkey's desire to see all countries in our region and beyond share the goals of non-proliferation and work collectively towards their attainment. After establishing the necessary export control regulations at the national level, Turkey joined the Nuclear Suppliers Group and became a member of the Australian Group. Turkey has also assumed its responsibilities within the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Missile Technology Control Regime and has joined the Zangger Committee. This complements the commitments we have undertaken by virtue of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

As a further manifestation of our non-proliferation policies, we became one of the first signatories of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Turkey is among the 44 countries whose ratification is required for the entry into force of the CTBT. We are fully aware of that special responsibility conferred on us in the service of international non-proliferation efforts, and we did our best to achieve early ratification of the Treaty. The ratification process was completed on 16 December 1999, and our instrument of ratification was deposited with the Secretary-General on 16 February 2000. The backing given to the CTBT by the Turkish Parliament and its rapid ratification are clear testimony to the consensus that prevails in both the legislative and the executive branches in support of national and international efforts designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We believe that the entry into force of the CTBT would be significantly eased through ratification by those countries that have signed the Treaty, and especially by those countries that have tested nuclear weapons in the past. We are of the opinion that the forthcoming Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will provide an appropriate forum for the international community to reaffirm its support for the Treaty.

The effective implementation of the CTBT will certainly be beneficial to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and to its pillar, the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We consider the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be a landmark of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. The NPT, which establishes a global norm for nuclear non-proliferation with its 187 States parties, is one of the most remarkable treaties of all time. Indeed, considerable progress has been achieved in the field of nuclear disarmament since the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. Indefinite extension of the Treaty made it a permanent feature of the global security edifice. Turkey has all along been an ardent supporter of the NPT and of its lofty goals. We abide strictly by the provisions of the Treaty.

The recent 2000 NPT Review Conference, held at New York, offered the first opportunity to consider in detail the operation of the Treaty since its indefinite extension. We welcome the consensus adoption of the Final Document of that Conference after intense negotiations. Turkey would also like to participate constructively in the preparations for the NPT review process, which will begin in the spring of 2002, with a view to ensuring the success of the next Review Conference, to be held in 2005.

We note with satisfaction that 187 countries have once again confirmed the continuing validity and importance of the nuclear non-proliferation regime as established by the Treaty. We also welcome the reaffirmation by the nuclear-weapon States of their unequivocal commitment to eliminate their nuclear arsenal in accordance with article VI of the Treaty, albeit without a specific timeframe. The provisions of the Final Document regarding further reductions of non-strategic nuclear weapons, increased transparency, and reduction of the operational status of nuclear weapons are all considered by Turkey to be positive steps. In view of our proximity to the Middle East, we attach importance to the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, which called for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and which was reaffirmed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference in the section entitled "Regional issues".

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements concluded freely among States in their respective regions will strengthen both global and regional peace and security. Turkey will continue to support the establishment of such zones wherever possible and feasible. In this context, we welcome the

steps taken by States to conclude further nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties — notably, the initiative launched by Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in Bishkek in 1998 to establish such a zone in Central Asia. We pledge our full support to this commendable initiative and encourage all nuclear-weapon States to work constructively towards its realization.

The primary role that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays within the framework of the non-proliferation regime is emphasized once more in the Final Document of the last NPT Review Conference. Indeed, this document, adopted by consensus, reflects and reaffirms confidence in the work of the IAEA assigned to it by various articles of the NPT. Turkey has repeatedly stated the importance we attach to the speedy entry into force of the strengthened safeguards measures of the Agency. Accordingly, we have signed the additional protocol to our safeguards agreement and are taking steps for its early ratification.

Turkey believes that the Conference on Disarmament must retain its role as the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament. However, the lack of progress in the Conference for the last three years has been a major cause of disappointment for us. We believe that we should avoid creating the erroneous impression that the Conference on Disarmament is becoming an ineffective body.

We had hoped that the positive outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference would be a source of inspiration at the beginning of the 2001 session. However, our hopes were not realized due to some divergent views on the Conference on Disarmament's programme of work. Although we had come to a point where most of the elements of the programme of work were agreed, two outstanding issues — namely, nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space — required further elaboration. We are of the opinion that this should not prevent us from establishing mechanisms on those items that we have already agreed on, while simultaneously continuing deliberations on other items. The gains achieved so far through a long and difficult process should be maintained.

In view of our geographical location, exposed to the risks of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means, Turkey believes that our urgent duty should now be to make use of every opportunity to move the Conference on Disarmament forward.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is unique among its kind, with its provisions aimed at prohibiting and eliminating an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under strict and effective international verification and control. Since its entry into force, the growth in the number of States party to the Convention is encouraging. Turkey has been a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention since 1997 and is firmly committed to its objectives. We have made the necessary adaptation in our national legislation to meet the requirements of the Convention. Our full compliance with the CWC provisions was reconfirmed during an inspection visit to the facilities of the Aliaga Petrochemical Industries Company last summer. We also try to encourage other countries, especially those in our neighbourhood that have not yet signed or ratified the CWC, to become party to it. Turkey is determined to continue its efforts in the future towards ensuring the non-proliferation of such weapons.

Turkey is fully conscious of the casualties and the ensuing human suffering caused by the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of mines. We attach importance to the mine-ban Treaty and consider it to be one of the major achievements of the international community towards the total elimination of anti-personnel mines. However, the security situation around Turkey is distinctly different from that faced by the proponents of the Ottawa process. This has prevented us from signing the Treaty. However, our commitment to the Treaty's goals was manifested by our participation in the First, Second and Third Meetings of the States Parties, held in Maputo, in Geneva and in Managua on 18-21 September 2001. Turkey also put into effect in January 1996 a national moratorium banning the sale and transfer of anti-personnel mines, and in 1998 this moratorium was extended until the year 2002. We have already cleared some 8,000 mines. Furthermore, Turkey has initiated a number of contacts with some neighbouring countries with a view to seeking the establishment of special regimes in order to keep our common borders free of anti-personnel mines. To this end, Turkey concluded bilateral agreements with Bulgaria in March 1999 and with Georgia in January 2001. We have proposed similar projects to Greece and Azerbaijan. Furthermore, Turkey contributed $50,000

for mine clearance activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkish troops stationed under the command of the Kosovo Force and the Stabilization Force have participated in these activities. For six consecutive months we funded the expenses of the Albanian Mines Action Committee, carrying out demining activities in the northern border regions of Albania.

I would like to stress once more my Government's determination to become a party to the Ottawa Convention. Our intention to this effect was made public on 6 April 2001, during the visit of the Greek Foreign Minister, Mr. Papandreou, to Turkey. On that occasion, our Foreign Minister, Mr. Cem, and Mr. Papandreou announced that Turkey and Greece would concurrently start the procedures that would make both countries party to the Ottawa Convention. According to the joint statement, Greece will initiate the ratification process of the Convention, and Turkey will start accession procedures. Following these steps, the instruments of ratification will be simultaneously deposited with the United Nations Secretary-General in due course.

Mr. Beyendeza (Uganda): On behalf of the Ugandan delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee. May I also join previous speakers in commending the able manner in which you and the members of your Bureau have so far steered the work of the Committee. My delegation would like to assure you of our full support and cooperation.

My delegation also wishes to express its appreciation to the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the excellent work done in producing and updating documents. In particular, may I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, for his opening statement. Uganda takes seriously the concern pointed out in the Secretary-General's report, in which he expresses the uncertainties about international disarmament cooperation at a time when the need for such cooperation has become more urgent.

Our Committee is meeting at a very crucial time, following the events of 11 September. Uganda has already conveyed its deepest condolences to the relatives and friends of those who perished in the fires of New York and Washington, and we wish a quick recovery to those who were injured and who are now undergoing treatment. As we have stated elsewhere, the attack of 11 September was an attack on the international community. More than 80 nations were involved. This kind of terrorist attack, using all manner of weapons, must be resisted. Uganda wishes to assure the international community that we are solidly behind the fight against terrorism in all its aspects.

The events of 11 September should increase the resolve of the international community to address the challenges we now face in the field of disarmament, with the goal of achieving international peace. Among other things, measures should be taken to strengthen existing agreements aimed at reducing nuclear arsenals and even eliminating them altogether. Tens of thousands of nuclear weapons are stockpiled. We know that one stockpile is already one too many in terms of capability to destroy.

That is why my delegation calls for progress to be made, as soon as possible, on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to enable it to enter into force in order to prevent such materials from ending up in the wrong hands. This is yet another reason why those States that are not yet parties to the Treaty are called upon to accede to it without further delay.

My delegation is disappointed at developments in a number of other areas of disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament ended its third session still unable to agree on a programme of work, thereby undermining the possibility of effective negotiations on nuclear disarmament or fissile materials.

Concerning the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, we are disappointed that — as many delegations have already noted — although the Treaty has been signed by 161 States and ratified by 79, it has not entered into force.

With respect to biological, chemical and other weapons, the picture is no rosier. With the current threat of use of biological weapons, there are no security guarantees that terrorists will not resort to this route to achieve their selfish ends. So far, four Conferences have failed to come to any concrete agreement. My delegation hopes that the Fifth Review Conference of the parties to the Convention, set for 19 November, will be more fruitful and more successful.

My delegation would like to draw the attention of this Committee to yet another area of concern for us:

the flourishing global arms market, which the Under-Secretary-General made reference to in his statement. This flourishing market means increased global military spending, involving billions of dollars in arms transfers. This type of investment has meant that developing countries, especially African ones, have had to divert their resources to acquire arms — especially small arms and light weapons — at the expense of investing in other urgent social and economic development projects which would be more beneficial. My delegation believes that such transfers of resources have a direct bearing on the causes of conflict within our regions and may be responsible for the devastating poverty, crippling diseases and constant instability these areas are currently experiencing.

We therefore need urgently to readjust our priorities, reduce levels of expenditure on armaments and reinvest those resources in programmes that can promote peace, security and development.

In this regard, my delegation last July joined in the overwhelming consensus to adopt a Programme of Action during the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Uganda looks forward to future reviews on this subject, in the hope that the remaining aspects of the question, including the private possession of weapons and the supply of arms to non-State actors, will be addressed.

Uganda will therefore support all those resolutions that call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We will work with all delegations that are genuinely concerned with the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of biological and toxin weapons and their destruction. Our delegation will support this Committee in its work on the disarmament agenda of the international community in all its aspects.

The Chairman: Consultations are extremely important in our work, but if they are conducted in this room, or in the back of the room, I ask that they be conducted in a more subdued manner.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I shall read out only excerpts from my statement, the full text of which will be circulated.

It is a singular pleasure to see you, an old friend and a respected colleague, presiding over the deliberations of the First Committee during this session. Having worked under your stewardship on the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, I am entirely confident that you will guide the work of this Committee in such a way as to obtain optimum results at this defining moment in world history. I also wish to express Pakistan's sincere appreciation to my friend, Ambassador U Mya Than of Myanmar, for the skilful manner in which he guided this Committee last year.

The Chinese symbol for "crisis" — *wei-ji* — depicts two paradoxical notions: danger and opportunity. The terrorist atrocities of 11 September and their aftermath epitomize the meaning of this pictogram. This tragedy, which hit at the heart of the world's greatest Power, illustrated the threat posed by terrorism in a globalized yet unequal world. It threw into bold relief the new dimensions of international insecurity and instability; it demonstrated the force of fanaticism; and it revealed the breeding grounds for this contemporary evil. These are some of the formidable challenges the world must confront.

Yet this tragedy also offers new opportunities. It has already brought the world's nations together into an international coalition. A body blow is being struck at the most visible manifestations of terrorism, and a sustained campaign has been launched to root out terrorism in its various vicious forms all over the world. It also offers the opportunity to finally bring peace to Afghanistan and relief and reconstruction to its brave and long-suffering people; to promote peace between Pakistan and India; to revive economic and political stability in the region; to address the conflicts and disputes which lie at the root of the anger, frustration and despair that breed the foot soldiers of terrorism; to eradicate poverty, which promotes and exacerbates conflicts and offers the recruits for terrorism; and to foster a dialogue among civilizations for cooperation and coexistence rather than a clash between them.

The 11 September attacks demonstrated that threats to State security can emanate from diverse sources, internal and external, that even the most powerful States are vulnerable to asymmetric threats and that the causes of such threats are complex, as are their consequences. To be durable, national and international security must be constructed comprehensively. The events of 11 September also demonstrated that comprehensive national and

international security can be constructed and preserved only through cooperation among States, not strategic competition or coercion. It is also increasingly evident that multilateral responses, in the security and economic spheres, are more effective than unilateral measures, even those taken by the world's most powerful States. The United Nations is the best instrument for the development and implementation of such multilateral approaches.

Even as we endeavour to evolve a new cooperative security structure, the United Nations Member States can provide momentum and practical content to this process through concrete progress on the identified elements of the global disarmament agenda.

After a brief period of post-cold-war euphoria, it is now widely recognized that the danger posed by nuclear weapons has not diminished. Indeed, it has increased. Nuclear disarmament must therefore retain the highest priority, which the world community has accorded to it over the last five decades.

Nuclear deterrence, so long as it serves strategic stability, should be maintained at the lowest possible level. The two major nuclear Powers continue to shoulder the primary responsibility for achieving further drastic reductions in their present nuclear arsenals. In the first instance, their nuclear weapons should be reduced — unilaterally, bilaterally or plurilaterally — to a level of parity with other nuclear-weapon States. Thereafter, further reductions in nuclear arsenals could be implemented multilaterally.

The nuclear-weapon States recognized under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) have committed themselves to the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. They should therefore agree to negotiations on nuclear disarmament within the Conference on Disarmament.

Pakistan is also committed to the commencement of the negotiation of a non-discriminatory international treaty for the prohibition of fissile materials designed to promote both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We also believe that talks on negative security assurances within the Conference on Disarmament can help to evolve agreed practical measures to reduce the danger of the use of nuclear weapons and to help counter new and old doctrines which contemplate the actual use of nuclear weapons. The Conference's work in this area could be a useful input to an international conference on reducing nuclear danger.

Three other steps are essential. The first is to evolve a consensus on the relationship between offensive and defensive weapons systems. The Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty is widely regarded as a pillar of global strategic stability. A change in the present arrangement — if at all required — should be evolved through a cooperative approach involving all concerned States. Otherwise, it could provoke a new arms race. Similarly, the implications of theatre missile defences for stability in some of the world's most sensitive regions need much greater attention. Pakistan is especially concerned that ABM systems are being introduced into South Asia. These could destabilize the deterrence which presently exists on the subcontinent.

The second step is a concerted endeavour to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space. This common heritage of mankind can be utilized to enhance international peace and security only within a cooperative framework. Unilateral steps — whether technological or military — will invariably invite responses from other Powers which feel that their security is jeopardized by such steps.

Thirdly, the threat posed by missiles must be addressed within a comprehensive and cooperative framework, responsive to the security concerns of all States. Pakistan has proposed that the item on missiles in all aspects should be added to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, with a view to negotiating a global treaty. We are participating in the Panel of Governmental Experts, which recommended a fair and comprehensive approach.

However, Pakistan cannot endorse arrangements for selective non-proliferation evolved by States which themselves retain the right to possess missiles while seeking to prevent others from acquiring or developing these even for the purpose of legitimate self-defence and deterrence. We shall be prepared, of course, to consider equitable and practical interim measures designed to reduce missile-related threats at all levels.

The Conference on Disarmament in which all the major national security interests are represented, can continue to serve as an effective mechanism for multilateral nuclear and conventional disarmament. With the demonstration of some flexibility on all sides, agreement can be achieved on a programme of work

for the Conference on the basis of the so-called Amorim proposal.

It is regrettable that a Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) protocol could not be finalized this year. At the forthcoming Fifth BWC Review Conference, the Pakistan delegation will work towards the resumption of negotiations.

Pakistan believes that, so far, insufficient attention has been devoted to the threat to global and regional peace and stability posed by the expansion, proliferation and increasing sophistication of conventional weapons. The widening gap in technological capabilities — encompassed by the so-called revolution in military affairs — and in the disparity of size of military budgets between the rich and the poor, the big and the smaller nations — is increasing the imbalance in conventional force capabilities at the international and regional levels. This escalating asymmetry can generate ambitions of domination and even military conquest. The international community must now address the problem of conventional arms control and disarmament in a comprehensive and credible manner. My delegation suggests that, as a first step, the United Nations or the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) be commissioned to prepare a study, with the participation of governmental experts on this subject. Thereafter, specific further steps could be identified and promoted at the global, regional and national levels.

Although our world has become an interdependent global village, security and disarmament can be promoted most effectively and equitably at the regional level, responding to the specific concerns and characteristics of each region.

The tragedy of 11 September could also open up opportunities for durable peace in South Asia. But there is a more urgent challenge which must be addressed first.

At a time when the world and Pakistan are focused on eliminating terrorism in Afghanistan, the threats from our eastern neighbour of pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan, artillery barrages and troop movements illustrate its desire to exploit the situation to secure concessions on Kashmir. Pakistan hopes that the international community will dissuade our neighbour from recourse to military adventurism or diplomatic coercion. As President Musharraf has stated,

"Pakistan knows how to defend its frontiers".

Any violation of our territory, any aggression, will be met by a firm and fierce response.

At the same time, the new international paradigm also offers an opportunity to build a new and stable security architecture for South Asia. The President of Pakistan has demonstrated that he is prepared to go the extra mile to extend the hand of friendship to India. He took the initiative once again last week to telephone Prime Minister Vajpayee to commiserate with him over the recent terrorist attack in Srinagar and to again invite him to visit Pakistan. We hope that both Prime Minister Vajpayee and Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh will find a mutually convenient date to visit Pakistan for renewed bilateral talks. We believe that while a bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan on Kashmir is essential it is not a sufficient condition to resolve the dispute. Bilateral negotiations, on various issues, between the two countries have never yielded an agreement, since our neighbour has always tried to use its larger size to seek unequal solutions. We share the view that the constitution of the international coalition against terrorism offers new opportunities to promote a just and peaceful solution to the Kashmir dispute.

Pakistan believes that we can also advance the goal of building a new security architecture for South Asia. We have outlined our concept of a strategic restraint regime involving nuclear restraint, conventional arms balance and a political mechanism for the resolution of mutual disputes and conflicts, including Kashmir.

To promote nuclear restraint and prevent the use of nuclear weapons, Pakistan suggests that the two countries agree: first, to formalize their respective unilateral nuclear-test moratoriums, perhaps through a bilateral treaty; secondly, not to operationally weaponize nuclear-capable missile systems; thirdly, not to operationally deploy nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, and to keep them on de-alert; fourthly, to formalize the previous understanding to provide prior and adequate notification of flight tests of missiles; fifthly, to observe a moratorium on the acquisition, deployment or development of anti-ballistic missile systems; sixthly, to implement further confidence-building and transparency measures to reduce the risk

of the use of nuclear weapons by miscalculation or accident; seventhly, to open discussions on the nuclear security doctrines of the two countries with a view to forestalling an all-out nuclear arms race; and, eighthly, to conclude an agreement on non-use of force, including non-use of nuclear weapons.

We hope that the international community will help both Pakistan and India to promote such measures for mutual nuclear restraint and provide technical advice and support to enhance the safety and security of South Asia's nuclear weapons.

The maintenance of a conventional balance between Pakistan and India is vital to ensure nuclear stability in the region. During the past decade Pakistan's conventional capabilities have been considerably eroded due to one-sided sanctions, while our neighbour has been relentlessly pursuing a major conventional arms build-up. Almost all its military assets are deployed against Pakistan. Therefore, a significant conventional imbalance will inevitably further increase Pakistan's reliance on the nuclear dimension of deterrence. The international community must discourage India's massive military acquisitions. Profits from arms sales cannot compensate for the enhanced danger of war in a nuclearized South Asia.

The aim of peace, stability and mutual restraint in South Asia will remain elusive so long as our eastern neighbour maintains its quest for a great-Power role and domination over its neighbours. Pakistan will not accept hegemony from within, or outside, South Asia. But we are prepared for cooperation as sovereign equals, in accordance with the new realities of a world where the principal national objectives of States can be achieved through economic and political cooperation, rather than military conquest or regional or global domination.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of my country, I take great pleasure in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are convinced that your experience is the best guarantee we could possibly have for a successful outcome to our work. I would also like to express my gratitude to your predecessor for the outstanding way in which he guided the work of the First Committee during the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, and to extend our congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau on their election. We reiterate our readiness to cooperate in the best interests of our work.

I also wish to reaffirm before the First Committee Kuwait's solidarity with the people and Government of the United States of America, who have experienced extremely trying times as a result of the horrifying terrorist attacks that struck New York and Washington on 11 September. I assure them that we share their grief and their determination. Those crimes were committed not only against the people of the United States, but also against the nationals of 80 other countries. Our condolences go out to each and every one of the families and friends of the victims. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) provides the best way to deal with this issue, as it reflects the determination of the entire international family to wipe out terrorism once and for all.

In recent days we have heard a number of statements which, although couched in different language, invariably agreed that there is a common political will to move towards a non-nuclear world. This is a reaffirmation of the Final Document adopted at the 1998 special session devoted to disarmament. At that time, disarmament efforts carried top priority. Hopes have risen since the end of the cold war that we might actually see a world governed by peace, security and stability. Yet that desire has not been fully achieved, neither in terms of relinquishing nuclear stockpiles nor with regard to the development of dangerous weapons of mass destruction.

The spectre of nuclear war continues to haunt the world. Nuclear weapons continue to be developed and to spread, in contravention of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards regime.

Nuclear-weapon States have still not agreed on how to resolve that problem. They have not begun, even gradually, to relinquish their stockpiles of weapons. Keeping such dangerous weapons is no longer an option. Indeed, world leaders, gathered together at the Millennium Summit, committed themselves to doing away with weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. Above and beyond that undertaking, agreements were entered into in May 2000 among the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that envisaged practical measures designed to achieve nuclear disarmament on a methodical and gradual basis.

Kuwait considers that there can be no justification whatever for any State to hold on to its weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. We reiterate the appeals made by peoples and Governments throughout the world for States to renounce such weapons. We hope that those appeals will be heeded and that the States concerned will be wise enough to eliminate their weapons. We must remind the nuclear-weapon States of their responsibility not to encourage or help non-nuclear States to join their ranks by manufacturing or stockpiling such weapons or by establishing facilities for their production. We would also like to remind them of the July 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice regarding the illegality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons in resolving conflict.

In this regard, I would like to reiterate the fact that my country supports the Secretary-General's proposal to convene an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers. Such a proposal was included in the Declaration adopted by the heads of State or Government during the Millennium Summit. A year has gone by since then, yet, unfortunately, neither the NPT nor the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has achieved universality or entered into force. Indeed, global military expenditures continue to grow, as does the illicit traffic in weapons, growing at a rate equal to or higher than the economic growth of any country. Even we in this Committee are still unable to reach agreement on our agenda, and continue to be paralysed on the issue of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. There are many other such problems that I could detail, but I shall say no more on that subject.

These concerns, which are felt by most peoples around the world, have led to a general sense of pessimism. The simple fact is that certain States are continuing to pursue their own selfish interests at the expense of international peace and security. Instead of helping the world to focus all its efforts on eliminating poverty and achieving sustainable development, last year alone countries throughout the world spent $800 billion on arming themselves with weapons of all kinds. Where is the wisdom and justice in that?

We in Kuwait are devoting particular attention to efforts to do away with weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in our part of the world, the Middle East. We are doing so through our involvement in efforts undertaken by the League of Arab States in accordance with the provisions of the relevant resolutions adopted by the Council of the League at its 101st session in September last year, calling for making the Middle East a zone free of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

Although all Arab States are signatories to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, this has not ensured even a minimum of protection and security because of the threat posed by Israel's nuclear weapons and the fact that that country flagrantly flouts international resolutions. Repeated appeals have been made by the international community, but Israel remains the only State in our region that has not acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — despite the fact that ours is one of the most sensitive regions of the world — thus creating a clear imbalance in military power and posing a great threat to international peace and security. The Israeli Government must renounce its nuclear arsenal and submit its nuclear facilities to the IAEA safeguards regime. We call upon States not to provide scientific or technological aid that might help Israel build up its nuclear forces, which continue to be a source of concern in the Middle East.

The pretext advanced by Israel flatly contradicts its expressed desire for peace. Peace must be built upon confidence; it cannot be built upon arms used against innocent civilians, including children.

I should like once again to refer to the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, which called upon the international community to take steps against nuclear proliferation and to renounce weapons of mass destruction, including those held for deterrent purposes. We in Kuwait are thoroughly familiar with the dangers of weapons of mass destruction; our bitter experience is the result of the fact that our northern neighbour, Iraq, used such weapons against us. The spectre of such Iraqi weapons continues to haunt the entire international community. Indeed, inspection efforts over the past 10 years have shown that Iraq continues its non-compliance with resolutions of international legitimacy and ignores issues related to disarmament. In fact, it has used weapons of mass destruction against its own people.

I would like to draw the attention of members to paragraph 31 of the report (A/56/1) of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, which states that Iraq is not abiding by the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1284 (1999), which affirms the obligation of the Government of Iraq to cooperate with the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission in enabling inspections of weapons of mass destruction. There has been no such cooperation by Iraq, and its weapons of mass destruction programmes are continuing. Furthermore, Iraq has not cooperated with the International Committee of the Red Cross and its efforts over the past 10 years to resolve the issue of prisoners and detainees of war.

In a letter dated 5 October 2001 to the President of the Security Council, contained in document S/2001/945, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency stated:

> "For nearly three years, the Agency has not been in a position to implement its mandate in Iraq under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and related resolutions. As a consequence, it is not able at present to provide any assurance that Iraq is in compliance with its obligations under these resolutions."

There can be no doubt that the comments of both the Secretary-General and the Director General of the IAEA demonstrate the invalidity of Iraq's claims that it has abided by its commitments with regard to section C of resolution 687 (1991).

Humankind has known the horrors of two world wars and is still suffering their consequences. We hope that we will not see a third world war — particularly a nuclear war. We must focus on what binds us together, on what we have in common, rather than on what divides us or is controversial. Future generations will not be able to pardon us if we fail in this regard.

Our hopes, prayers and expectations in Kuwait are for the new century to be devoid of the wounds and crimes of the past. In the twentieth century we had bitter experiences with regional and civil wars that have destabilized countries, taken millions of innocent lives and hampered development in many parts of the world. We hope that future generations will not have to endure the reality of terms such as "war", "prisoner of war", "genocide", "suppression", and "terrorism" and other evils.

Mr. Tekle (Eritrea): Allow me to seize this opportunity, on behalf of the Eritrean delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee. Allow me also to congratulate your colleagues in the Bureau.

I am confident that with your rich experience and diplomatic skills you will guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. Let me assure you of the Eritrean delegation's cooperation and support as you fulfil your duties.

Allow me also to take this opportunity to convey sincere congratulations to Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the United Nations staff on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2001.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation and thanks to your predecessor for the excellent manner in which he performed as chairperson of this Committee during the previous session.

My delegation also wishes to extend thanks and appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Jayantha Dhanapala for his comprehensive presentation of the major issues to be discussed in this Committee and for his commitment to the cause of disarmament and international peace and security.

We meet in the tragic aftermath of a senseless and barbaric aggression by international terrorism against the people of the United States and the cold-blooded murder of thousands of citizens from over 60 Member States of the United Nations. We extend our deepest condolences and sympathy to their respective Governments and their bereaved families. Once again, the Eritrean Government condemns the barbarity without any reservation.

Two years into the new millennium a pall of pessimism seems to have replaced the euphoria and the hope that had pervaded the world after the end of the cold war. Today, the international community is confronted by, on the one hand, daunting new problems and challenges and, on the other, continues to be haunted by problems that have bedevilled it for decades. Today aggression, intervention, interference in the internal affairs of other States, occupation of other countries' territories by force, irredentism, racism and the threat or actual use of force, which had been considered relics of the past, manifest themselves along with rampant terrorism and other new forms of

violence, deportations, ethnic cleansing, genocide and massive violations of human rights.

It is true that during the past year the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted an action plan under which nuclear-weapon States undertook to totally eliminate their nuclear arms. It is also true that the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects also came out with fresh developments.

On the other hand, there were also attempts to turn the clock back in respect of matters in which humanity had achieved great victories, even during the cold war. The last year has, in particular, been a source of worry and frustration in the field of arms control and disarmament. The threat of nuclear weapons has once again become real, as the effort to achieve non-proliferation has been frustrated. The adoption of unjustifiable strategic doctrines and policies, the unrestrained development and stockpiling of old and new nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as the forging of new alliances, have made the threat to peace real.

The problem is compounded by the fact that, as a result of such new attitudes, important negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament have been deadlocked during the past three years. The NPT Preparatory Committee has not been able to formulate meaningful recommendations on the basis of the 13 steps agreed to during the 2000 Review Conference. It was also not possible to conclude a protocol to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The continued lack of progress has not only negatively impacted on international, and particularly regional, peace, security and stability, but is also undermining the credibility of, and confidence in, those United Nations and other multilateral agencies that are actively engaged in these negotiations. There is thus the need to urgently undertake a thorough assessment of the situation with a view to achieving a proper focus on new approaches and setting new priorities regarding the issues at hand.

If the situation is bleak, however, it certainly is not desperate, and it should be possible to turn the tide and return to the profitable route of arms control and disarmament if, inter alia, we were to heed the advice of the Secretary-General and fully utilize the disarmament machinery in the United Nations system, if agreement were to be reached on the convening of a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, which would enable us to establish universal goals for the near future, and if a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty were to be universally accepted. To this end, we urge all nuclear-weapon States, as well as the nuclear-weapon-capable States in all regions to engage themselves in bona fide negotiations that will enable the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Government of Eritrea is convinced that the question of security becomes more relevant and meaningful to many of our countries only in the context of the overwhelming socio-economic problems and immense structural changes that threaten our peoples.

It is no longer possible to address disarmament and international peace and security issues in any way meaningful to the overwhelming majority of humanity without linking them to issues related to the rising levels of poverty, destabilizing migration flows and the displacement of population, as well as food shortages, malnutrition and famine, declining public health and education, intensifying terrorism and criminal violence. These current problems can be resolved not by old-fashioned state-centric approaches but by focusing and concentrating on communities.

The Eritrean Government is also convinced, more than ever before, that it would be futile to define national security narrowly in view of the catastrophe that took place on 11 September. It must be recognized that the concepts of the indivisibility, interdependence and inter-relatedness of humanity have acquired a new meaning in which not only our cooperation, but also our vulnerability, has assumed international dimensions. It is now certain that we are one in our vulnerability. It is equally certain that we must be one in our stand and resolve. Our close cooperation becomes urgent when it is realized that a small group of terrorists can actually possess weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, biological and chemical ones, and destroy large areas of the world and millions of innocent people with wilful abandon, senselessly and indiscriminately. In this connection, the need to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention with a verification and compliance regime becomes all the more evident.

It is on the basis of these premises that the Eritrean delegation shares the repeated expressions of concern by the Secretary-General, heeds his warning about the grave dangers posed by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and supports his appeals against uncontrolled sales of and illicit traffic in these weapons.

The ease with which these weapons can be purchased and transferred is a matter of serious concern in many regions of the world, including the Horn of Africa, if only because such arms have been responsible for about 90 per cent of the deaths in conflicts. Women and children constitute eighty per cent of the casualties, signifying that non-combatants have been the most vulnerable targets. At present, these arms, in fact, not only have become threats to national and regional peace, security and stability but also pose grave dangers to the socio-economic development of many countries, particularly the least-developed countries, including those countries of the Horn of Africa. None of these countries can afford the massive drain on their resources caused by such squandering in an unjustifiable arms race.

The Government of Eritrea recognizes the importance of the need to approach the challenges posed by the proliferation and accessibility of small arms and light weapons at the regional level. To this end, it has attempted to forge a consensus within the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) that would serve as the basis for a meaningful programme to control the further spreading of these arms in the Horn of Africa. No consensus has yet been forged because of the intransigence of one of the States, whose destabilization policies, including the supply of weapons to dissident elements, terrorists and mercenaries, as well as military interventions, continue unchecked to the detriment of the peace, security and stability of the other States of the region, notably Somalia.

The Eritrean delegation is for this reason convinced of the urgent need to establish an internationally sanctioned set of rules, standards and guidelines that can effectively regulate the reduction of stockpiles and check the trafficking of these weapons, particularly at the regional level. It is dismayed by the inconclusive results of the Conference on small arms and light weapons held in July 2001 and welcomes the urgent convening of another conference in the near future.

The Eritrean delegation acknowledges with thanks the important role played so far by the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, including the Centre in Africa, in the promotion of dialogue on peace, disarmament and development issues at the regional and subregional levels. They have truly contributed much to promote arms control, confidence-building and trust among States.

The issue of landmines has a historically emotive place in Eritrean history because its citizens have been victims of these infernal weapons ever since the beginning of their liberation struggle. Although we did not accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines until recently, we have scrupulously adhered to the humanitarian principles enshrined in its provisions because they had — long before the writing of the Convention — already constituted the core values and guiding principles of the struggle. This is a proud record that has been attested to by third parties.

One of the first agencies established as a matter of priority immediately after the liberation of our country was the Eritrean Demining Agency. This agency performed remarkably in spite of the meagre resources and minimal external assistance at its disposal. Its demining activities, as well as its training and mine-awareness programmes, have enabled thousands of our displaced population to resettle in their homes, farms and grazing lands.

Unfortunately, Eritrean fields have once again been massively mined by an irresponsible and brutal Government that is a signatory to the Convention. Peasants who have fled their homes cannot return because a heartless enemy, with the criminal intent of preventing them from quickly returning to a normal life, has refused to provide complete maps of the areas it has mined.

Once again, it becomes evident that the signing of conventions alone will not eliminate landmines. It only makes a mockery of the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*. It therefore becomes urgent for the international community to assemble rules, guidelines and mechanisms, based on lessons learned, for restraining and sanctioning irresponsible Governments. The Convention will become a dead letter without sanctions to enforce respect for it and to punish first users, since their victims will have no alternative but to

use those weapons when, as in the case of Eritrea, they are victimized by irresponsible Governments.

In conclusion, the Eritrean delegation wishes to emphasize again that the commitment to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction — including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons — and of conventional weapons, as well as the search for peace and cooperative relations, cannot and must not be seen in isolation from the need to alleviate poverty and deprivation and to respect human rights. Humanity must not tire or despair in its relentless search for a human environment free of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Paclisanu (International Committee of the Red Cross): This is the first time we are addressing the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We could not call ourselves a humanitarian organization if, before delivering our statement, we did not pause briefly to think about the thousands of people who lost their lives on 11 September in this city of New York, and to think about the many more thousands who survive in pain and grief.

In the next eight weeks, two important review conferences on global arms treaties will be held in Geneva, relating to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. These are of fundamental importance in assuring that the customary rules of international humanitarian law governing the choice of weapons are faithfully applied to specific weapons likely to have indiscriminate effects and cause suffering beyond military necessity or which simply are abhorrent.

The Second Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) will convene in Geneva on 11 December. This Conference provides a unique opportunity to extend the Convention's protection of both civilians and combatants to non-international armed conflicts and to launch a process aimed at addressing the grave humanitarian problems caused by explosive remnants of war. By extending the scope of application of the Convention to non-international armed conflicts, States parties will make clear that the rules of the Convention should be the minimum standards for all armed conflicts, including, of course, those of an internal nature, which are most prevalent today.

Over the past two years, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has sought to document and raise awareness of the global humanitarian problem caused by explosive remnants of war. Virtually all armed conflicts in modern times have left explosive remnants of war in their wake. Unexploded submunitions, artillery shells, bombs, landmines, booby traps and even missiles often remain after the end of hostilities for national authorities and local civilian populations to deal with — most of the time alone. In many instances, these munitions remain for decades and inflict severe human costs.

Military experts recognize that munitions that fail to explode on impact are of no military value whatsoever and, in fact, impede military operations. According to them, the scale of humanitarian problems caused by explosive remnants of war is, moreover, likely to grow dramatically in the future with the increased ability to rapidly deliver large amounts of ordnance over greater distances. This means, in other words, that even conflicts lasting a few days can leave huge numbers of unexploded munitions. Protracted conflicts can, of course, be expected to cause even more massive damage.

The ICRC therefore urges States parties to agree, at the upcoming Review Conference, on a mandate for a group of governmental experts to begin negotiations towards a new protocol on explosive remnants of war. It should be completed within a timeframe which reflects the urgency of the situation. Such a protocol should address a variety of issues based on the principles already contained in the CCW and its protocols. These include the responsibility for clearing or providing assistance for clearance of unexploded munitions; provision of technical information to facilitate clearance; provision of warnings to civilian populations; and, in the case of sub-munitions, a prohibition of their use against any military objective located within a concentration of civilians.

The Committee also takes this opportunity to encourage States which are not yet party to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons to adhere to that important instrument in the near future and to participate in the Review Conference. The ICRC also invites parties to the CCW to take note of a report it has submitted on the production and proliferation of 12.7 mm multi-purpose bullets. The document highlights the Committee's concern that the proliferation of such bullets, which can explode within

the human body, will undermine respect for the 1868 St. Petersburg Declaration. That instrument of customary international law prohibits explosive bullets so as to protect combatants from inevitable death or extreme suffering, which serve no military necessity. States are therefore encouraged to review their ammunition procurement policies in this light.

The Fifth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) should strongly reaffirm the long-standing public abhorrence of the use of any form of biological weapon by any party to a conflict for any purpose whatsoever. It should also reaffirm the international community's total rejection of this form of warfare, as contained in both the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the BWC itself. States parties are urged, at the upcoming Review Conference, to spare no effort to strengthen the BWC. This is particularly urgent to ensure that rapid advances in the fields of microbiology, genetic engineering and biotechnology are used to benefit humanity and are not turned against it.

The September meeting in Managua of States parties to the Convention on the prohibition of anti-personnel mines was an important occasion to take stock of the process of universalization and implementation of that unique treaty, as well as to encourage efforts to create a zone free of anti-personnel mines in Central America. The ICRC welcomes the steady increase in adherence to that instrument, which now stands at 122 States parties.

The Committee encourages all States which have not yet done so to adhere to that instrument, which represents the only effective solution to the global epidemic of landmine injuries. It is greatly encouraged by the fact that, in countries where the Convention's comprehensive programme of mine action is being pursued, the annual number of new mine victims has fallen dramatically. As a result largely of resources mobilized through the Convention, the ICRC has, since 1997, been able to triple the number of mine-awareness programmes and to double the number of patients receiving orthopaedic appliances to some 28,000 last year. Ongoing ICRC medical or surgical assistance for war-wounded currently extends to some 150 hospitals, some of which are in 20 mine-affected countries.

The July United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was an important step in drawing attention to the enormous human costs of the unregulated availability of small arms and light weapons. It is important that the Conference acknowledged that this trade

> "undermines respect for international humanitarian law, impedes the provision of humanitarian assistance to victims of armed conflict and fuels crime and terrorism". (*A/CONF.192/15, part IV, I, para. 5*)

It is equally important that States undertook to put in place a wide range of national measures to combat this trade. The ICRC now calls on States to urgently enact the agreed upon measures. States are likewise invited to review their laws and policies governing the transfer of arms and ammunition with a view to preventing access by those who are likely to violate international humanitarian law.

Lastly, we would like to reaffirm that the ICRC, the 177 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their International Federation are committed to long-term work to raise awareness of the humanitarian implications of unregulated arms availability, while at the same time continuing efforts to end the scourge of landmines and other explosive remnants of war.

The Chairman: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Mahmoud (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Kuwaiti delegation has made its usual claims about Iraq. This is no surprise to us, especially coming as it does from a country that is pursuing ongoing daily aggression against Iraq. It allows British and American aircraft to bomb Iraq over the no-fly zones extending from the Kuwaiti border, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission, contained in document S/2001/913. This aggression has killed innocent civilians, in violation of the United Nations Charter and resolutions of international legitimacy. As the Secretary-General notes, the no-fly zones are illegal.

On this occasion, my delegation wishes once again to reiterate that Iraq has no weapons of mass destruction, as indicated in some official documents of the Organization. We are ready and willing to discuss this matter with any delegation that wishes to have information and documentation proving our point. That

is what Iraq did during its dialogue with the Secretary-General.

As for what the Kuwaiti delegation calls "prisoners", let me stress that it would be better to use the term employed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): Kuwaiti "missing persons". The exchange of prisoners was among the terms of the 1991 ceasefire. Iraq has met its commitment in that regard, as the International Committee of the Red Cross has indicated. Here, we call upon Kuwait to respond to the call by the League of Arab States and by Iraq to sit down with Iraq to resolve the issue of Iraqi and Kuwaiti missing persons, and not to politicize this matter.

As we enter the twenty-first century, we call upon Kuwait to reconsider its aggressive policies towards Iraq and to desist from spreading false allegations and erroneous claims.

We are here in this international forum to discuss matters related to disarmament. Our goal is a noble one — nobler than name-calling and accusations: the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait): I apologize for taking the floor once again; it is not my intention to waste the Committee's time. But I cannot sit here and listen to the representative of Iraq level accusations at my country for absolutely no reason. The issue here is an issue of credibility. Had Iraq fulfilled all that is required of it by Security Council resolutions, the Council would not be engrossed in dealing with the issue of Iraq. All we did was state the facts. What we said was what the Secretary-General stated in his annual report on the work of the Organization (A/56/1). And what we said was what the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) stated in a letter (S/2001/945, enclosure) to the President of the Security Council just two weeks ago, reaffirming that Iraq has not fulfilled its obligations under Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and all other relevant resolutions.

As for the prisoners of war, had we intended to politicize that issue we would have done so a long time ago. But the importance of the issue lies in the fact that the Security Council has issued nine presidential statements requiring Iraq to commence cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with the Tripartite Commission and with His Excellency Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov, whom the Secretary-General has appointed to follow up this issue.

I would like to reaffirm once again that Kuwait does not intend to waste the Committee's time, and only stated the facts with regard to disarmament.

Mr. Mahmoud (Iraq): With reference to what the representative of Kuwait has said, we referred in our speech yesterday to the documents, which clearly say that Iraq has fulfilled its obligations. What the Kuwaiti delegation refers to has still not been proved credible, especially in the light of the politicization of the issue in the Security Council.

I turn now to the question of missing Kuwaitis, to which the representative of Kuwait has referred. As the representative of Iraq said, he is always ready to sit with Kuwait and discuss this issue, and to discuss the issue with countries that truly have missing persons. Iraq has done so: we did so last year with Saudi Arabia, and were able successfully to resolve a missing persons file. So, we call again on Kuwait, as the League of Arab States has done, to cooperate with Iraq on this question and to resolve the question of missing Iraqis and Kuwaitis.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait): Once again, I apologize for taking the floor. Kuwait has been ready to talk with regard to our missing prisoners of war in the forums that international legality has put forward: the Tripartite Commission and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). It is not we who, for more than three years, have boycotted the meetings of the ICRC dealing with this issue. It is Iraq that has consistently refused to attend those meetings, thus using this purely humanitarian issue as a political card. It is not we.

The Chairman: We have heard the last speaker in the debate, and have thus concluded our general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items.

Organization of work

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): We are very well aware that there are deadlines to be met, and we certainly have to be aware of time limitations. Only yesterday, the Chairman reminded us that we are approaching the second phase of our work and that draft resolutions

were to be submitted to the Secretariat by 6 p.m. tomorrow, 18 October. But so far, the negotiations among the sponsors of certain draft resolutions indicate that we still need a little more time.

I wish therefore to appeal for an extension of the deadline by at least one day, until 6 p.m. Friday, 19 October. That would certainly facilitate the adoption of draft resolutions. We know we are under time pressures, but I think this is a reasonable request.

The Chairman: Does the representative of Nepal have in mind the specific draft resolution on which his delegation is working, or is this a general suggestion?

Mr. Thapa (Nepal): Yes, I have a specific draft resolution in mind. It relates to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific.

The reason I am taking up this issue is that my Government is going to sign a host country agreement with the United Nations, and we are trying to finalize the timetable as to when we can sign it. We have an indication from the Department concerned that it could be signed tomorrow, but in case we need a few hours more, we would just like to ask if the deadline could be extended by at least one day. I think the problem would then be resolved. This is because in the resolution that we are intending to introduce, there will be a reference to the signature of the host country agreement concerning the relocation of the Centre to Kathmandu.

We are making a great effort to meet the deadline. Taking into account our situation, the Committee will, I hope, consider our request positively.

The Chairman: Let me just enumerate a couple of points, three or four points of which members of the Committee are aware, but I still think it would be important to reiterate them.

We will start the second phase of our work, as you know, on Monday, 22 October. Document A/C.1/56/CRP.2 has been distributed for easy reference in order to see how the structure of the discussion will go.

I also would like to urge delegations to inscribe their names on the list of speakers for the particular subject they would like to address, if possible.

Finally, I come to the issue of the deadline for submission of draft resolutions on all disarmament and international security agenda items. The deadline is Thursday, 18 October 2001, at 6.00 p.m. I would then make a departure from this deadline in light of the request just presented to us by the representative of Nepal for the specific draft resolution on which he is working. I understand his objective reasons, but I would like to ask the delegation not to construe this very generous concession from the Chair as a precedent for others. So, as far as the representative of Nepal is concerned, we understand the difficulties he might be encountering. I count very much on his draft coming to the Chair by Friday, but I would reiterate that the deadline for the submission of drafts is 18 October at 6.00 p.m., and I would like to ask for the cooperation and understanding of delegations to abide by this deadline.

If this seems to be agreeable — I mean here, obviously, the reference made to our colleague from Nepal — I would take it that he has an extra day to work on his specific draft resolution.

Now, I have also been requested to remind delegations and other participants in the First Committee that they are all invited by the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Global Security Institute to a discussion this afternoon with Mr. Robert MacNamara, former United States Secretary of Defense, on the theme "Lessons for today from the Cuban missile crisis". The discussion will be held today at 3.00 p.m. in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library auditorium.

I also have an announcement by our Secretary of the Committee, to whom I give the floor.

The Secretary of the Committee: I would like to remind the delegations concerned that the Group of Experts on First Committee matters of the Group of African States will hold a meeting this morning in this conference room immediately after the adjournment of the meeting of the First Committee.

The Chairman: The next meeting of the First Committee will be held on Monday, 22 October 2001, at 10.00, in this conference room. Please make use of the two remaining days of the week as efficiently as possible.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.